OLD NEW ENGLAND TRAITS

BY

GEORGE LUNT

HURD & HOUGHTON

OLD
NEW ENGLAND TRAITS

EDITED BY

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. . . this story's actually true.
If any person doubt it, I appeal
To history, tradition, and to facts,
To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel.
BYRON

NEW YORK
PUBLISHED BY HURD AND HOUGHTON
Cambridge: The Riverside Press
1873

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Editor of this little volume does not deem it incumbent upon him to explain in what way the author's manuscript came into his possession. He hopes it may be enough for him to say, that the writer believed himself to be the only person whose memory retained most of the incidents and anecdotes herein recorded; and a long and familiar acquaintance with his character enables the Editor to state, that entire credence is due to his narrative of facts, written down as occurring within his own knowledge and to his relation of whatever he alleges himself to have derived from others. A slight veil of mystery seems to have been originally thrown over the story; especially in regard to the names of persons; but, as all who are

familiar with the locality will at once recognize its general features, the Editor has thought it best, for the benefit of others not so well informed, to make all proper explanations on this point in the Index.

Sometimes, New England has been spoken of as devoid of the elements of romance; but perhaps this idea may be owing to the fact, that the means of presenting a different aspect of the case have not been sufficiently investigated. A similar impression has prevailed in respect to Roman history and literature, whether fabulous or otherwise; and the fathers of New England, at least, have been thought to have exhibited some of the traits, especially the simplicity and severity of character, which distinguished those more ancient worthies, whose names and deeds have been so long famous. But without making other citations, I may remark, that I am scarcely acquainted with a poem more thoroughly romantic in conception and sentiment, than

"Gallus," the tenth eclogue of Virgil; and Macaulay, in his "Lays of Ancient Rome," has turned some of its legends to fine poetical account. Where can be found, for instance, a prettier, or more suggestive picture, than the passage in his "Virginia," which some inspired painter might make immortal upon canvas, as it is in verse:—

> "With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
> Home she went bounding from the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm."

Perhaps, the solemnities of the colonial history of New England may have overshadowed much of whatever poetical interest might be discovered in its private annals. It depends upon the reader, whether the present narrative may be thought in some measure to qualify the imputation in question.

G. L.

OLD NEW ENGLAND TRAITS.

CHAPTER I.

It was the winter of 18—, between fifty and sixty years ago. Certainly the winters of New England began earlier and were more severe than they have seemed at a later period. After the fervid heat of summer has become subdued by the progressive changes of the season, no atmosphere could be clearer, purer, more exhilarating than the prevailing tone of our October days, and this kindly influence, as if by way of preparing the human frame for the gradual approach of winter, generally extends, with occasional stormy intermissions, through November, and often very far into the frosty domain of December itself. And such snow-storms as we once endured! It

may be alleged, that distance of time forbids accuracy of comparison, and that masses of snow, which appeared vast to a child, would not seem so immense to a full-grown man, and were really no more huge than some of those with which winter nowadays envelopes the ground. But facts within my memory do not admit of such an explanation, for I distinctly recollect the driving storm which continued for days and piled its accumulating heaps against the front of our dwelling-place, so as entirely to cover the windows of the lower story of the house, and to rise above the main door which was of ordinary height, and that at length we were released from this imprisonment by means of an archway to that entrance, dug through the drift by the friendly efforts of an opposite neighbor.[1]

[1] As I set down these reminiscences I observe the following paragraph in a Boston daily paper of November 27, 1872 : —

"NOVEMBER SNOW. Fifty-two years ago to-day there were twenty-eight inches of snow on a level in the vicinity of Portsmouth, N. H."

Our deliverer was a superannuated seaman ; inspired partly, no doubt, by the good-heartedness formerly, at least, thought to be characteristic of that class of men, and, partly, by respect for the memory of my father, who had been dead for some years, in the early prime of life, leaving behind him the best of reputations as a shipmaster and a man. Perhaps Tom Trudge had, at some time, sailed under him. I well remember the triumphant air with which this ancient mariner introduced himself into the kitchen, where all the family was assembled, doffing his tarpaulin, flourishing his shovel, and cutting one or two capers, in token of his hilarity at the accomplishment of his somewhat arduous job. Of course, there were profuse thanks and congratulations on the occasion ; but I recollect only, that, after the second glass of grog furnished by my mother, — a refreshment to which Tom was only too partial, — he executed another spring from the floor, snapped his fingers

and cried, "Tired, ma'am! — not a bit of it! For all I've done to-day, by the blessed binnacle I should think nothing at all of jumping over a meetin-us, — yes, a meetin-us, ma'am!" to the amazement, at the idea of such a feat, of certainly all the younger fry who were present at the ceremony.

The town in which we lived was one of the very oldest of the New England settlements. Its situation is uncommonly beautiful, upon a slope descending from a moderately elevated ridge towards the bank of a noble river, which of late years has furnished more motive power to various manufacturing establishments in the towns and villages, which have sprung up on its borders, than any other stream in the world. At the time of which I write, there was not a mill throughout its whole extent. It is told, that Louis Philippe, when a fugitive in this country, in his youth, passing up the road which leads mostly along the margin of the river to a point where the first falls

interrupt the navigation, pronounced the scenery the most beautiful he had ever seen. The river was then chiefly famous for the rafts of admirable timber which it sent down from the primeval forests above, for the construction of the unsurpassed ships built near the town, and for the commerce flourishing upon its bosom and extending to every quarter of the globe. It was idle enough, in comparison, at a later period.

Early in the present century, and for a long series of years in the past, no town on the American coast surpassed it in commercial enterprise and activity. The habits and traditions of the place were well calculated to nurse a hardy race of seamen, and their reputation for skill and courage was well known throughout the maritime world. Persons are very apt to look at some direct circumstance, nearest at hand, for the cause of events, which may after all result from much more remote contingencies. So, at

first, in the days of the declining trade of the town, they said the obstruction to its commerce was owing to the sand-bar at the mouth of the river. But the bar had been there from time immemorial; and though it is true that modern-built vessels, with their cargoes, could not pass that barrier, as ships of lesser tonnage were formerly accustomed to do, yet the main cause for this decay of business was to be found in the growth of the capital of the State, and the greater facilities for the transaction of business which exist in larger than in smaller places.

But the bar itself was always of very dangerous passage in boisterous weather, and often the daring pilots of the station, than whom none upon the coast were more competent and courageous, were exposed to extreme peril, in their small craft, in returning to the river, when they had been on the look-out for inward-bound vessels in the bay.

It so happened that a schooner in which I was a passenger, when a youngster, was detained outside the bar, and was likely to be detained for several hours, waiting for the tide to make. A young pilot, accompanied by his still younger brother, came alongside in their whale-boat, and having some acquaintance with me invited me to sail with them to town ; and, having been some time absent from home, I gladly accepted their offer. Their boat was under a single low sail. The breeze was fresh and the day fair, though I could not but be aware, as we bowled along towards the bar, that a retreating storm had left some indications of its past presence in the tossing foam that sprang upwards as the waves dashed upon that treacherous heap of shifting sand. The pilot sat in the stern-sheets of the dancing boat, steering steadily with an oar. His brother tended the sail, and I was crouched amidships. As we approached nearer the scene of commotion,

our younger companion assumed a station in the bow of the boat and began to sound with an oar. This looked a little formidable to a landsman; and soon turning his head in the interval of hastily pushing his implement into the water, the bowsman called out to his brother, "Joe, are you going to try it?" Joe made no sign, but steered steadily on. Again and again the sounding oar went rapidly down, and I suppose at last to the bottom, and again the young man cried out with renewed energy, "Joe, are you going to try it?" Joe uttered no word, but chewing his quid, looked steadfastly forward. In a moment a heavy wave struck the boat, drenching us plentifully, but not filling her, and bounding up, staggering a little, she dashed on, and with another like slap or two, we were over and in fairly smooth water. Had the boat struck bottom, she would have been instantly dashed to pieces and we should have met the sad fate of others who, before

and since, have been drowned and lost to sight forever in that seething tide.

In a conversation with a very eminent English novelist, of profounder skill and more permanent fame, in my opinion, than any other since Scott, he expressed his surprise at the solid aspect of the city of Boston, in which we had met, on the day after his arrival in this country, upon his first lecturing tour. He had enjoyed the best opportunities of viewing "men and cities," not only in Europe, but in various parts of the farther East. I took the liberty of replying that Boston had been growing nearly two centuries and a half, and inquired if he expected to see wigwams, or even those slighter fabrics which betoken the earlier stages of advancing colonization. He said, "No, of course not; but it had quite as substantial an appearance as an English city." But it is to be remembered that the persons who came to this country, at first, and from time to time, afterwards, were al-

ready civilized, and brought with them and transmitted to their descendants much of the knowledge and many of the habits, peculiarities, and even the traditions of their ancestors "at home." Our town, too, looked old, though far from being so substantially built as Boston.

In fact, while reading the fragment of Scott's autobiography of his earlier days, and Dean Ramsay's "Reminiscences," one might almost think that their descriptions of character and manners, in so ancient a city as Edinburgh, were in many respects but a recapitulation of popular ways and even of personal oddities in our own respectable American town. Especially, the great novelist's vivid narrative of the desperate street conflicts between the lads of the several quarters of the "auld town," revives many boyish recollections. In my youth, the division was into Northenders and Southenders; but as our own residence was in the central part of the town,

we stood, as it were, between two fires. The conflicts usually took place in the winter, when the snow was on the ground, and though heartily engaged in, and sometimes quite too rough for play, were generally good-natured enough to avoid any very serious danger to life or limb. In the higher schools, the lads were drawn from every quarter of the town; but upon dismissal for the day, or upon the afternoons of Wednesday and Saturday, when no school was kept, the partisans of the several sections offered combat which was seldom refused. The usual weapons were snow-balls, which were sometimes, I regret to say, dipped in water and frozen over night, and kept in some secure place to await the expected battle, and occasionally a pebble, the missile commonly used by the Scottish combatants, was inserted, — a practice which was almost universally condemned. Very seldom did we come to a hand-fight, for a spirited "rush," when either party felt

strong enough for it, was almost always followed by a rapid retreat on the other side. But woe to the luckless stripling whose headlong courage carried him far in advance of his companions; for upon a sudden turn of affairs he was a captive, and down in an instant, and mercilessly "scrubbed" with snow by a dozen ready hands, until the rallying host of his compatriots advanced vigorously to the rescue. The normal alliance of us middle-men was with the Southenders, though a good deal rougher than ourselves; and in times of truce a solitary boy would walk a little gingerly through their quarter, as errands or family occasions led him that way. But the principal commercial interests centered in those parts of the town, and if, upon the breaking out of determined warfare, we could secure, in the capacity of leader, the services of some lubberly boy who had made a voyage, even a mere coasting trip, to sea, though I remember that these were

sometimes far less adventurous in the field than those who had no experience of the perilous deep, the issue of the contest was not for a moment doubtful. The forces of our adversaries melted away, like the snow with which they fought, at the very presence of a champion supposed to be of such redoubted prowess. The dependence of those adverse combatants was rather upon some of the younger hangers-on at the ship-yards, in their territory, for such a casual auxiliary. Sometimes, the elements of military skill would be displayed. While the two forces were closely engaged, a flanking party would make a sudden rush up some short by-street, and then the complete demoralization and panic-flight of the warriors thus newly assailed was something truly disastrous to behold.

Of course, we enjoyed the ordinary boyish sports of boating, swimming, and skating in the season for it; or, of a pleasant afternoon, would roam away "over the

hills," as the phrase ran, huckleberrying, perhaps, or gathering penny-royal and other wild herbs for the old folks at home; to be dried and reserved for future occasions. For, in those days, a garret would hardly be considered complete, without bunches of these simples hanging from the beams by strings, or stored away in paper-bags. In the fall of the year, we had another resource, long since interdicted by the owners of farms in the neighborhood of populous towns. This was the pleasure of nutting; for the urchins of those days regarded these kinds of fruit, growing on trees in the fields, as a sort of *feræ natura* and free to every passer-by; though the more surly proprietors, even then, took much pains to circumvent and capture the lads, as they returned with their poles for beating the branches and with their loaded bags, borne by two or three of them, hanging by the middle across those implements. Sometimes, predatory bands proceeded in force

and defied the farmer on his own ground. The story was told of one luckless individual who went nutting alone and was caught and imprisoned, for a time, in the cellar of the farm-house, but mischievously contrived to set all the taps of the cider-barrels running, before he was released. These excursions led us often to the Devil's Den, an excavation in an abandoned ledge of limestone, in a solitary situation at some distance from the town, and guarded, now as then, by three rather spectral-looking Lombardy poplars, which to us boys had a sort of mystic and undefined significance. Here we procured bits of serpentine, interspersed with veins of *rag-stone*, as we denominated asbestos, which, strangely enough, we used to chew. I suppose that no boy ever went to that place alone, and a sort of solemn ceremony attended his first visit with his older playmates, to a scene bearing an appellation ominous enough to call up every vague dread of his youthful heart. The

approach on these occasions was rather circuitous, through the pastures, until an elevated mass of stone, standing quite solitary, was reached, designated as "Pulpit Rock." To the summit of this, the neophyte was required to climb, and there to repeat some accustomed formula, I fear not very reverent, by way of initiation, and supposed to be of power to avert any malign influences to which the unprepared intruder upon the premises of the nominal lord of the domain might otherwise be subjected. For these youngsters the ordinary means of education were abundantly supplied, and the girls, too, had their Academy for those who aspired to something beyond the common range; and when, at a later period, I became conversant with their circle, I must say that I have never known young ladies of better manners or more cultivated minds. As an evidence of more expansive benevolence than usual, and of profounder interest in the affairs of the great

world abroad, I remember that when the class of students in Goldsmith's Ancient History came to recitation, one young lady burst into a torrent of tears. The astonished teacher anxiously inquired into the cause of her emotion. In the midst of her sobs she ejaculated, "Oh, that good man, Socrates! To think they should have treated him so!" She was finally soothed; but considering that the incident in question was of a rather remote date, this ebullition of feeling evinced a generous sympathy with a victim of past injustice, truly worthy of a philanthropic mind.

It is still a town of stately mansions upon its principal street, and one more beautiful can scarcely be imagined. The magnificent elms, of the graceful American kind, which line its borders, have always been reckoned a feature of extraordinary beauty. Of late years, special means for supplying and preserving this elegant and useful kind of embellishment of the streets have been

provided by the liberal bequest, for this purpose, of Mr. John Bromfield, a native of the town, but long a respected merchant at the capital of the State. A conspicuous house standing upon a gentle elevation, at some distance from the street, with pleasant grounds in its front and rear, was appropriately named by its original proprietor "Mount Rural," though not, perhaps, with the most exact observance of the requirements of grammatical construction. Still, it has some authority for being considered idiomatic, for does not "Pilgrim's Progress" tell us of the "Palace Beautiful?" And doubtless many other instances might be cited of the substitution of an adjective for a noun. At all events, the worthy owner, who built his house in the most approved style of former New England architecture, spacious, square, and with projecting windows in the roof, made some pretensions to classical allusion; for cultivating extensive gardens in the rear of his

dwelling, he placed for an inscription on his front wall, —

"Miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma," —

a citation which, it is to be feared, would be taken rather as encouragement to mischievous urchins, if any of them understood it, rather than as a warning to abstain from the fruit.

Near the extremity of the opposite quarter of the town still stands an ancient edifice of solid stone, with a couple of stories of porch of the same material, approached by a lane, bordered with trees, leading some distance from the highway, and constituting, with some modern additions, the dwelling-place of a considerable farm. It boasts an age of more than two centuries, as appears by the figures above its entrance, and was apparently built for defence, when precautions against Indian incursions were thought necessary, though afterwards used as a powder-house; and tradition has it that, on one occasion, an explosion took

place by night, which blew away a part of the side wall, lifted the bed on which a negro woman, the slave of the occupant, was asleep, bore her safely across the road, and planted her, bed and all, upon the spreading branches of an apple-tree, without injury. An early owner of the place was the ancestor of one of the recent Presidents of the United States, and it was known, until quite a modern period, as the PIERCE Farm.

Not many years ago, there still remained at the corner of a street, between the points just designated, one of those ancient houses not common in this country, the second story resting on heavy beams, which showed themselves in the outside walls, and the walls of the long, low dwelling filled in with a coat of dark plaster braced by wooden cross-pieces, like those of Shakespeare's birthplace at Stratford. The handsome houses before alluded to were the residences chiefly of merchants, or sea-captains, who had retired from their maritime or commercial occupations

with a competence, or of prosperous professional persons.[1] But a competence in those frugal days was an insignificant sum in comparison with the fortunes of our own time, scarcely approaching the annual income of the shoddy-masters, who now regulate the avenues of social and so-called aristocratic life. Indeed, I was once informed by an old inhabitant, that the richest person in the town, near the close of the last century, was assessed upon only ten thousand dollars' worth of personal property. But I

[1] The late Mr. George Wood, of Washington, a native of our town, in some highly interesting *Memorabilia*, formerly published, says: "The aristocracy were not on High Street, as now, but on Water Street, and more at the South than the North end, as the old houses give evidence to this day. The Johnsons, Jacksons, Davenports, Coffins, Greenleafs, Bartletts, Pierces, Hoopers, Tappans, Todds, Carters, Lunts, Marquands, and others of wealth, were on Water Street or near it. There were their grand houses and fine gardens, and it was not till they thought of retiring from business that they removed to the West-end or up-town, as gradually as they always do in all places."

think there must be some mistake in this statement, unless the rate of taxation was exceedingly low; for this same prosperous merchant devoted twenty times as much as that reputed capital to certain pious uses, during his protracted life-time, and still left forty times as much at his decease. Doubtless in those better days, the inevitable "rates" ("death and rates," they used to say, "were certain") were so small as to press but lightly upon the incomes of individuals in moderate circumstances, and the means of getting at the exact measure of a man's worldly "worth," had not reached their present degree of perfection. Indeed I may state, upon unquestionable authority, that, late in the first quarter of the present century, a highly respected trader of the town, who lived genteelly and was taxed upon a supposed capital of eighteen thousand dollars, waited upon the assessors and blandly told them, "Gentlemen, I have been more than usually prosperous the last

year, and am willing you should tax me upon an additional thousand." Such combined integrity and disinterestedness was the theme of universal commendation ; but when the old gentleman went to another reckoning a few years afterwards, his heirs had the benefit of an estate nearer one hundred thousand dollars in value, than the limited capital which had contributed its quota to the public burdens. In a word, I have heard my Aunt Judith say, that in her youth it was usual for respectable young women to take service with more thriving neighbors or friends, for the annual allowance of their board and a single calico gown, at four and sixpence a yard, — as the price was before mills were established on our own ground.

I cannot help referring more particularly to some of the families of the town, who imparted to it a well-founded reputation, not surpassed, if equaled, by that of any town or city in the land ; for instance, there

were the Lowells, who gave name, afterwards, to that wonderful city of spindles, which enjoys as world-wide a standing in the annals of manufacturing enterprise as the old-world Manchester of a long-anterior date, and one of whom, amid the desolate ruins of Luxor, struck by the hand of fatal disease, conceived the idea of establishing that noble Institute which bears his name, and will convey it to future grateful generations; a name, too, which has so resounded in the popular literature of the day. Then, there were the Jacksons, famous in mechanics and in two of the learned professions; Charles Jackson, the erudite and upright judge, and James Jackson, one of those skillful and truly benevolent physicians, whose memory is still in the hearts of many surviving patients. The Tyngs, too, resided there, long honorably connected with colonial history and still represented by descendants of national repute. Amongst other remarkable individuals was Jacob

Perkins, the famous inventor, who at an advanced age ended his useful career with no little foreign celebrity in the great city of the world. I have read lately of his successful exhibition of his wonderful steam-gun, in the presence of the Duke of Wellington and other competent judges of the experiment, and know not what national prejudice, perhaps, or other casual reason, prevented its adoption.[1] In science, too, we had Master Nicholas Pike, an ancient magistrate, whose arithmetic held its ground throughout the country, until it was superseded by that of Master Michael Walsh, which received the high commendation of so capital a judge, in matters of calculation, as the old land-surveyor and finally head of the

[1] After resigning his office of judge, which he had held for only a few years, but administered with extraordinary ability and integrity, Judge Jackson went abroad for relaxation, and a letter from a gentleman in London to a friend on this side the water says, — "Two of your townsmen, Judge Jackson and Jacob Perkins, now fill the public eye of England, and are the subjects of public and private conversation."

nation, Washington. Master Walsh was an Irishman by birth, though "caught young," as Dr. Johnson remarked, to account for any distinction acquired by natives of Scotland; and he displayed much of that impulsive temperament imputed to the people of Erin's Green Isle. He dressed in the old style, his gray hair gathered into a queue, and wearing top-boots to the last. He was an excellent classical scholar, as well as mathematician. The pupils he prepared for college did justice to his instructions, and some have acquired great eminence in the several professions and in the conduct of important national affairs. As an instance of his patriotic attachment to his adopted country, upon casually meeting, late in life, a certain writer of the town, after a cordial salutation, he added with a slight dash of the brogue, "I thank ye for the Red and the Blue!" The young person was a little taken aback, not remembering the allusion, for a moment, when the old

gentleman repeated emphatically, — "The Red and the Blue, ye know — Tom Campbell." It was in reference to a couple of stanzas, addressed to the United States by that great lyric poet, scarcely equaled in his day, namely: —

"United States! your banner wears
Two emblems; one of fame;
Alas! the other that it bears
Reminds us of your shame!

"The white man's liberty in types
Stands blazoned by your stars:
But what's the meaning of your stripes?
They mean your negroes' scars."

To this the American had retorted: —

"TO THE ENGLISH FLAG.

"England! whence came each glowing hue,
That tints yon flag of 'meteor' light,[1] —
The streaming red, the deeper blue,
Crossed with the moonbeam's pearly white?

[1] "The meteor flag of England," etc. Campbell. "Ye mariners of England."

"The blood and bruise, — the *blue* and *red*, —
Let Asia's groaning millions speak!
The *white*, — it tells the color fled
From starving Erin's pallid cheek!"

The verses were at first circulated as above set down. Campbell afterwards altered the two first lines of the second stanza into: —

"Your standard's constellation types
White freedom by its stars," etc., —

impairing it, as some will think, both in force and in whatever poetical expression it may have originally had. Poets are apt to make similar mistakes, frittering away the first glow of thought and language, in revision. Has not Tennyson thus injured "The ride of the six hundred?" and did not Campbell himself half spoil "Hohenlinden," by taming its phraseology down into a supposed superfluous accuracy? For example, he first wrote, —

"'Tis morn, but scarce yon lurid sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun," etc.

It occurred to him, or some "stop-watch critic" suggested, that the sun itself was not actually "lurid," on that celebrated occasion, and he accordingly changed the expression to "level," thus signifying a mere natural phenomenon; and, besides the sacrifice of a fine poetical expression, forgetting that the sun must have appeared actually "lurid" through the interposition of "the war-clouds, rolling dun." Nor is this the only instance of misapplied fastidiousness in that splendid and stirring piece.

Then, there was the Rev. Dr. Spring, father of that celebrated clergyman, Dr. Gardiner Spring, of New York. He had been a chaplain in the army of the Revolution; and when I, as a boy, pulled off my cap to him in the street, I fancied there was something a little military in his polite salute in return. The good Doctor held to what were called Hopkinsian tenets, a special form of strict orthodoxy; and it was alleged that, differing from the ordinary prac-

tice of religious people in the town, and construing literally the record of the Creation, " The evening and the morning were the first day," — the Saturday evening was observed with primitive strictness in the family, while on Sunday evening, after sunset, the excellent matron assumed her knitting-work, or attended to whatever secular occupation she chose. I have often thought, and it seems likely, that the name of Swett — that of one of the most eminent and excellent physicians of his day, in our community, and who in fact fell a sacrifice to the faithful discharge of his professional duty — was the same as Schwedt, borne by the Prince de Schwedt, well known at the court of Frederick of Prussia (so called) the Great. The good Doctor examined the throat of a yellow fever patient, in a vessel lying at quarantine ground in the river, and inhaling his infectious breath, went home declaring he had taken the disease, of which he shortly died. The efforts and liberality of

his son, the late Colonel Samuel Swett, in promoting the establishment of the Public Library of the town, though himself long a resident in the capital of the State, will forever endear his memory to the inhabitants. The daughter of another distinguished physician, Dr. Sawyer, was Mrs. George Lee, who gained no little reputation by her "Lives of the Ancient Painters," and especially by a book which attained great popularity under the title of "Three Experiments of Living." I should do great injustice to a list of noted personages — to some of whom allusion is made elsewhere in these pages, and which might be extended, if consistent with the objects of this work, were I to omit mention of a lady, Miss Hannah F. Gould, whose poetical productions gained her well-deserved applause and many friends, and some of whose highly pleasing verses still retain their hold upon public esteem. Reflectively, too, we might claim some share in the distinction of the most popular Ameri-

can poet of our own day; for the direct ancestors of Longfellow were natives of our immediate vicinage. I had no intention, certainly, of offering any tribute to the living in these memorials of the past; but one name inevitably suggests itself, better known on 'Change, in London, than in the place of his birth. I speak of William Wheelwright, a lad, at the period to which these sketches refer, long resident abroad, though occasionally brought home by the obligations and affections of family ties, to whose enterprise, and arduous, untiring pursuit of his object are owing steam navigation and railway lines in the southern part of this Continent, and to whose praise the whole South American coast will respond.

There were others and many, of high personal character and local reputation, and not a few of strongly marked characteristics, whose names, perhaps, would scarcely sound familiar to modern ears;

but I cannot pass over one wealthy merchant, distinguished for his strong common sense and decided individuality, as well as for a success in business scarcely equaled in this country, in his day, — the well-known William Bartlett, to whose judicious bounty the chief theological seminary of the State and its principal Academy for the instruction of youth owe so much toward the assurance of their permanent foundation.

Nor should the memory of Oliver Putnam fail of a record, who, long absent from his native town, provided by his will for a generous bequest, upon which a Free School of the highest character has been long established. Nor should due tribute be forgotten in honor of George Peabody, who, remembering those days of his youth which were passed in acquiring habits of business in the place, distinguished its Public Library by a munificent gift.

There had been many other men of marked character and great local influ-

ence: Tracys, Daltons, Greenleafs, Davenports, Hoopers, Bradburys, Johnsons, Coffins, Bromfields, Crosses; and many more, doubtless, might be thought worthy of mention. Among those named above, Nathaniel Tracy was one of the wealthiest merchants of his day, elsewhere referred to in this narrative as suffering immense losses by his advances to the government, when its needs were great and its credit was low, and in other ways. Tristram Dalton was a Senator of the United States from Massachusetts, in the First Congress under the Constitution; and Theophilus Bradbury, afterwards appointed to the bench of the supreme court of the State, was a member of the Federal House of Representatives during a part of Washington's administration. Indeed, from some of the early inhabitants of the town are descended not a few of the principal families in the capital of the State; and its representatives, by some tie of original or later connection, are scattered throughout the whole country.

I linger somewhat longer and lovingly upon this preliminary part of whatever story I may have to tell, because I am aware of nothing in the literature of New England which furnishes precisely similar reminiscences, and because pictures of past manners, if truthfully portrayed, can hardly fail to be both interesting and useful. We heard plentiful stories, in our youth, of a higher style of living in colonial days, of coaches kept by the upper class of citizens; of their slaves, whom we knew in their emancipated condition as gardeners and waiters in general; of the cocked hats, the gold-embroidered garments, the laced ruffles of the gentlemen, and the highly ornamented, but rather stiff garniture in which the ladies with their powdered heads saw fit to array themselves, as they now present themselves to us on the living canvas of Copley. It was in the handsome residence of Mr. Dalton, long after his decease, that I saw hangings of gilded morocco leather on

the walls of the principal room, — a substitute for the wall-paper in common use, and which I have never seen or heard of in any other instance, in the United States.

Our collector of the customs was peculiarly one of this class of gentlemen of the old school. He was a person of very warm temperament and of remarkable characteristics; an ardent Democrat, who, upon the accession of President Jefferson, had succeeded Colonel W——, the first collector of the port, appointed by Washington, under whom he had served with distinction in the Revolutionary War. The residence of the latter, and the office of customs itself, in those simpler days, were in the house which was afterwards the birthplace of the writer of these sketches. To that war the successor of the old soldier principally owed a large fortune, which he had accumulated as the result of his privateering adventures; and it is said that the prizes came in so plentifully, that once he lifted up his hand

and declared, "O Lord, it is enough!" However this may be, it is certain that not long afterwards his riches gradually vanished, and he was compelled to seek and obtained the office upon which he supported his declining days. Though "aristocratic" enough in his own personal character and demeanor, he was not naturally in much favor with the grandees of the old Federal town; but they stood in awe of him, nevertheless; for he had been very rich, and in his less prosperous days was still a person of the most impulsive and resolute spirit. His appearance in public was very marked. His person was manly and his countenance singularly striking. He dressed in black, his small-clothes terminating in white cotton stockings down to his gouty foot. On his white head, decorated with a queue, was his three-cornered hat. He seemed to take a pride in walking up the principal business street of the town, at the time of high "'Change," and paying attention to no one,

to utter his not always very conciliatory thoughts aloud, in regard to his contemporaries and matters in general, as he threw out sideways the gouty foot aforesaid, on his way to the one o'clock dinner, which was the fashion of the time.

But the Revolutionary War exhausted the fortunes of many prosperous men of the day; and the story is told of one very rich merchant, who could drive in his own carriage several days' journey — when such a journey over difficult roads was hardly so much as could be accomplished by "the hollow, pampered jades of Asia," — and sleep in his own house every night. He lent immense sums, for the time, to the Revolutionary government, received what he could recover in depreciated currency, and failed. At the period of my narrative, the country was suffering from the consequences of another war, and the once active commerce of the old town was reduced to the lowest ebb. It was then that active emigration

began from the sterile soil of New England — since rendered so much more productive by intelligent cultivation — to the fertile region known as "The Ohio;" just as, not much more than half a century ago, people talked of "The Coos country" in New Hampshire, and within a few years we spoke of the "Far West," brought at length within the compass of ordinary travel and civilization.

As a picture of the rigors and extremities, I fear only too common, of early New England life, among its hardy agricultural population, I present extracts of a letter received from a venerable friend, a few years ago, who from the depths of poverty, having emigrated in his youth to wild lands not very far West, had risen to comparative wealth, which he devoted to useful purposes. In fact, the son of an extremely poor Vermont farmer became, by his own energy and integrity, the possessor of a competent fortune, which enabled him, with

views far surpassing the immediate claims of this transitory world; to build a church and to establish a flourishing educational institution, destined long, I trust, to dispense infinite blessings to future generations. Thus, after some preliminary matter, he proceeds to say, under date of March 16, 1866: —

"My father was one of the poor men of Vermont. When I was a small boy I have pealed many a birch broom for a sixpence.[1] My Father could get one shilling for what he made, take them on his back, carry them four or five miles, sell them, bring home a little meal, or a little bread, sometimes a half bushel Potatoes. My mother would go two or three miles, and do a washing, bring home at night a loaf of wry bread, and a small peace was all we had for supper and a smaller Piece in the morning. Sometimes we was allowed one Potato roasted in the ashes — no Hearth in the old log-House.

[1] These brooms are made by peeling strips from the stump, which are fastened below.

My mother has stirred butter in a tea-cup with the point of a knife, to keep her little children from starving. My Father had about half acre of oats — poor fence — the old cow got in the oats and died. Then came the pinch — we as little children had to flee to the woods to get something to sustain life — no schools, no meetings — nothing but hunger and despair. I lived with my Father until I was twenty-one years old. After I was sixteen my Father improved a little in living. When I was a little over twenty-one I got me a wife — we was both Poor — three knifes, three forks, three teacups, three chairs, a poor bed — hardly could we keep house. But our courage was good — my wife always standing by me, through all my trouble and trials — shoulder to shoulder — heart & hand, from the day of our marriage until the day of her Death. No man never had a better wife than I had — always kind to the Poor and to all her relations. She is now in the Grave Yard, and my judgment is, she is well prepared for the next world — and for the good feeling I have had for her for over fifty-six

years, I have Erected a monument over her grave weighing 7 tons, and twenty-one feet high — it is a splendid monument — cost me over $600.00.

"On the Eighth day of last July the Bishop confirmed 28 in our Church at the —— everything in good order — the singing was complete — my Voice is still heard above all the singers and I still stand at the head of the choir — I am only 77. — On the 16th day of last October, Previous notice being given, the wardens and Vestry met at my house — one minister was also present, a Lawyer being called to do the business. At 2 o'clock, P. M. I commenced handing over Deeds of land, Buildings, Bonds, mortgages, money & furniture, to the amount of nineteen thousand and five hundred Dollars, the use and interest only to be used for the Church and the —— Institute; but in case there should be a failure of the Church & school, for seven years, at any one time, then the Property to go back to my Heirs.

"I have been schooling from 7 to 11 Poor children, yearly — I am now not schooling as

many — my school is doing well — we have a good minister and he is a good Preacher. The Church is doing well. I am now commencing one more building, 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and three stories high, for the convenience of more room for Boarders in the —— Institute.

"I wrung more Bells at the fall of Richmond than any man in the United States, which they was all purchased with one man's money — 7 was the number, 4 large ones & 3 small ones — it is true I was a little opposed to the War — but no matter. The Brick Church and the Buildings I built for the —— Institute now with Interest cost me now over $43.000. They are all Paid for and I am out of Debt. I have furnished every stick of wood for the Church, and have carried the most of it in since it was built. I still wring the Bells on all occasions." etc. etc.

There is, perhaps, a touch of the garrulity of age in this good man's recital; but I consider his record of his early life, slight as it is, yet too strikingly suggestive to

be left to chances which might await a private letter. Indeed, the character thus displayed is surely equal to that of the best of the old Romans, in the middling class of life, enlightened too by a living faith of which they had no conception; and the sketch gives fair warrant for the conclusion, that, in point of manly simplicity and integrity, the traits and the trials of those elder worthies who helped to settle our republican institutions have not been overdrawn.

CHAPTER II.

I SHOULD scarcely deem it expedient to enter at much detail into the eccentricities of our good townspeople, though it seems to me that in our own street I could recall enough to make a pretty sizable volume.

But one feature of the times deserves a passing notice. I refer to the inconsiderable number of insane persons, compared with the sad increase of that unfortunate class in our own day, and the manner in which they were treated. Of course, a more widely extended population multiplies the sum of every description of disease. Besides, our ancestors were a hardier race than their descendants, more inured to the regular routine of physical toil, less given than the men and women of the present day to hurtful indulgence, and far less exposed to the disturbing excitements of

business and pleasure. So far as I know, there were but two really insane persons in our population of some seven or eight thousand, though doubtless certain others were more or less "light-headed." One of those two was sullenly crazy, and accounted dangerous, and therefore subjected to physical restraint; the other, generally harmless, roamed through the town at his own will, calling occasionally upon the acquaintance of his better days, and making magnificent promises of the benefits he intended to bestow, "when his ship came in." If I had inherited only a moderate dividend of the proceeds of the successive ships and their cargoes, which he promised my mother, on the above favorable contingency, usually calling her out from dinner to whisper to her these magnificent promises, more to her alarm than satisfaction, though being a woman of spirit she put a brave face upon it — I should look down upon a Rothschild, an Astor, or a Vanderbilt with nat-

ural contempt. Sometimes, incarceration was thought necessary, also, in his case; and I have a vivid recollection of the place of confinement allotted to each patient.

This was in the yard of the almshouse, for state and county asylums had not then been thought of, and the strong wooden building in which they were placed consisted of two apartments, perhaps twelve feet square, one above and the other beneath the surface of the ground; the latter, in fact, a dungeon with one barred window on a level with the yard. Here they passed their gloomy hours as they might, in solitude and darkness, scarcely relieved by light from without, with nothing to alleviate the horrors of their condition, and probably considered in a state too hopeless to admit of any remedy. The tenant of the upper cell was comparatively lively, on the occasion of resort to his window for conversation, or out of curiosity, which was freely permitted; but his neighbor in the

dungeon was dangerous; and I can never forget the terror inspired by a sudden and vicious attempt made by him to seize the legs of us children through the bars, as we stood conversing with the inmate of the room above. Science and humanity have done very much, in modern times, toward the restoration of such unhappy beings, who are in a majority of cases susceptible of cure, or of improvement enough to warrant their return to domestic life. But it is to be feared we are yet far behind, in this country, the more enlightened and effectual methods pursued for this purpose in some other civilized nations.

On one side of the street above alluded to lived for a long time, in my boyhood, an ancient shoemaker entirely alone; and as he guarded his residence with great secrecy and sold none of his wares, curious people were puzzled to understand how he supported existence. He was known to be partially deranged. Mischievous boys,

sometimes, gathered in numbers, would often assail his door with stones, standing ready for a start. But if they were on the watch, so was Pettengill, from previous experience, waiting behind his door with a heavy wooden bar in his hand, and giving instant chase to the flying urchins, would send the bar rattling at their heels. One day, after a season of unusual quiet, one of our lads anxious to penetrate his mystery, ventured to knock gently at the barred portal, was admitted, and expressed his wish to purchase a pair of shoes. The old man opened several chests containing the articles sought for, and finally selected a pair which proved a fit; but upon his visitor's making known his readiness to buy, the maker deliberately returned them to their receptacle, locked it fast and gravely declared, that he did "not like to part with them, for fear of spoiling his assortment."

The next building was occupied by a respectable English couple as a dwelling-

place, with a small grocer's shop in front. They had no children, except one strapping son of the old lady by a former husband, grown to man's estate, and whose business seemed to be to lounge about the premises in drab small-clothes ; for I never saw him do anything. The old lady might be seen of a morning, with iron pattens on her feet and her clothes tucked up, mopping the floor of the shop ; but in the afternoon much more genteelly attired in silks of an ancient fashion. Mr. Brown was a very quiet, inoffensive person, the wife a little high-strung. It is certain that they had occasional domestic bickerings, perhaps about the young man in the knee-breeches ; for on one occasion it is alleged that the old matron was overheard to address her spouse, with a slightly Hibernian accentuation, — " Brune, Brune, ye case-knife looking son of a gun ! I married ye neither for love, nor for money, but the pure convanience of the shop ! " As these worthy people have long

ago passed away, there seems no scandal in detailing this little family incident.

Directly opposite these premises was a large old-fashioned house, still standing, and, a century before, the residence of the minister of the First Church. It was long afterwards occupied by a noted magistrate for the trial of small actions, who served many years as town-clerk, and was an energetic orator at town-meetings and in parish affairs. A culprit was once brought before him for stealing a gentleman's set of new shirts. The fact was stiffly denied. "A pretty story," said the accused party, "that I should take his shirts!" An official scrutiny, however, soon exhibited him standing with the half dozen articles of attire, one over another, upon his person. "What a villain!" said the astonished justice. "Why didn't you tell me you was a villain and save the time of the court, of the witnesses, and the spectators, by owning up you were a villain, in the first place?"

The citizens of the old town were pretty thorough Puritans, by inheritance and inclination, at the middle of the last century. But the minister of the First Church was, in his day, a gentleman noted for his liberal tastes and accomplishments. He had a picture painted on a broad panel over the fire-place of his library, representing himself and several others of the cloth sitting around a table, in the full canonicals of wig, gown, and band, before each a foaming mug of ale, and each supplied with a tobacco pipe from which rolled volumes of narcotic fumes. At the top of the painting was a legend in the Latin language, of which the following is, I believe, a correct copy, —

"In essentialibus unitas, in non-essentialibus libertas, in omnibus charitas."

They appeared to be having a jolly time, and evidently considered the slight indulgences to which they were addicted among the moral non-essentials, however neces-

sary to their physical comfort. In this picture, which is still extant, the rules of perspective were not rigorously obeyed. In fact, the table is considerably tipped, whether supposed to result from some sudden hilarious movement on the part of the reverend compotators or owing to want of skill in the artist, I am not able to testify. Indeed, the manners of the times had not then attained their present professed strictness in regard to the use of exhilarating liquors, and I have inspected a tavern-bill rendered to the principal citizens, for articles of this sort consumed on some joyful public occasion, at a much later period, the amount of which in quantity, though not in price, would astonish a modern city council.

At the corner of the street stood an ancient tavern, the principal establishment of the kind in the place, at which in staging times all the stage-coaches from Boston and the eastward hauled up to change

horses. It was kept by the father of the popular host of one of the best known of the long-established New York hotels. I well remember seeing a considerable body of British sailors halted there for refreshment, under guard, on their way to some prison in the interior, during the War of 1812. They were true British tars of the traditional type, with immense clubs of hair, tied up with eel-skins and hanging short and thick down their necks. They seemed in no wise depressed by their condition and in fact were treated extremely well, for the general feeling of the town was decidedly adverse to the war. I also remember a gathering in front of the tavern, when the evening coach was expected, with the idea of mobbing an unpopular general officer who was to pass through by that conveyance. But a better sentiment was inculcated by the more orderly portion of the assembly, and the obnoxious warrior was not molested, otherwise than by ex-

pressions of dislike, either upon alighting, or when taking his place to resume his journey. Politics ran very high at the time, almost to the entire suspension of social relations between the differing parties, — the Federalists, who opposed the war, and were accused of unpatriotic sympathy with the cause of the enemy, and the Republicans, often stigmatized as Jacobins, who were charged with the principles and designs which had given impulse to the great French Revolution. Doubtless these parties shared, on the one side and the other, in the hereditary enmity, long since allayed if not altogether extinguished, between England and France. But whatever might be the general turn of political sentiment, both sides felt a patriotic pride in the success of the American arms. Hence, it is probable, the temper of the crowd assembled to do dishonor to the unlucky general. While the Republicans were indignant at a supposed needless national

disaster, the Federalists could scarcely rejoice at it ; and thus the moderation of the latter tended to restrain the former from the display of any actually violent demonstration. At the same period, there was formed, among the older administration men of the day, a veteran military organization, of those beyond the ordinary age of military service, well-known locally under the significant appellation of the " Silver Greys." The corps was composed of elderly merchants and traders and retired sea-captains, and their drills manifested at least the ambition of military prowess. Their opponents alleged that their company was formed for merely political purposes, and to overawe the town ; but their own doubtless more just solution of the matter was, that their object was to aid in repelling invasion, in the unlikely case that the British troops should land upon their own borders. They gave more promise, certainly, of efficient service, should dan-

ger arise, than could be expected of the superannuated Trojans chief of Priam's court, as their catalogue is translated by Pope from the living record of Homer: —

"Here sat the seniors of the Trojan race,
Old Priam's chiefs and most in Priam's grace;
The king the first, Thymœtes at his side,
Lampus and Clitias, long in council tried,
Panthus and Hicetaon, once the strong,
And next, the wisest of the reverend throng,
Antenor grave and sage Ucalegon,
Leaned on the walls and basked before the sun;
Chiefs who no more in bloody fights engage,
But wise through time and narrative with age,
In summer days like grasshoppers rejoice,
A bloodless race, that send a feeble voice," etc.

The town had suffered everything from the war and the interdiction of commerce in which it had been most actively engaged, preceding the event. Multitudes were absolutely ruined, and the gaunt wolf stood grinning at almost every other threshold. Among the memorials of that great struggle, it may be as well to mention the rusted cannon planted for posts at the cor-

ners of certain of the streets, the breech sunk in the ground and a bomb-shell fastened in the muzzle. At such a time, it is not strange that force occasionally took the place of law.

I could recall not a few instances in which, under the impulse of political resentment, passion got the better of judgment. One day, the marshal of the United States, in his cocked hat and with other official insignia, entered the tavern I have mentioned, in quest of a fugitive from justice. He inquired of a person whom he met in the public apartment, if he had lately seen one Captain E——, who, it seems, on some supposed provocation, had only thrown a custom-house officer into the dock in one of our eastern harbors. The person addressed by the marshal said that Captain E—— had just passed down the street, and when the marshal turned to pursue the culprit, that individual, who was no other than the one just addressed,

slipped out of another door, ran by the stable in the rear of the tavern and called upon Jem Knox, the hostler, to harness a chaise with all speed and to follow him forthwith in his flight. It appears, that the story of the captain's adventure was already pretty well known in the public places of the town, and as a visit of the marshal from Boston was a very extraordinary event in a place usually so quiet, a prying character who was upon the spot asked him if he was not looking for Captain E——. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, — "That's the man," said he, "you have just spoken to." The marshal started in pursuit and the captain had called out to such persons of his acquaintance as saw him running, that he was chased by a United States' officer. Half way through the street, one Clement Starr, a stalwart Englishman, who lived at the spot and whose sympathies, political and otherwise, were with the weaker party, seized the marshal by the collar and in-

sisted upon knowing what was the cause of the considerable tumult which the outcry — "Stop him!" had raised. Escaping this obstacle, the poor marshal was soon afterwards clasped in the vigorous embrace of a spirited matron, who stood on her door-step as he passed, and, besides being an acquaintance of the captain, was of the same political proclivities as those of the retreating mariner.

While tearing himself away from this lively lady, Knox drove furiously by, pulled up as he overtook the fugitive, who, as a witness of the affair told me, tumbled into the chaise, and was soon out of the reach of the threatening danger. Whether he was ever taken afterwards, or what became of the prosecution, I have never heard.

Not far from us lived a worthy widow, with a family of children, and on one occasion she was heard to mingle rather curiously an office of devotion with a somewhat severe threat of domestic discipline. It

was a day in summer, and the windows being open, a passer-by heard her objurgation. It seems the family had assembled at the dinner-table, and her oldest son began by making premature demonstrations toward the provisions, when his mother emphatically addressed him: "You Bob Barker, if you stick your fork into that meat before I've asked a blessing, I'll be the death of ye!"

There was a worthy shipmaster, also, who used to trade to Hayti, when that stalwart colored person, Christophe, was the Emperor, who used to say, "Put a bag of coffee in the mouth of h——, and a Yankee will be sure to go after it." On one occasion, so the story ran, Captain H—— complained of some insult from one of Christophe's ragged soldiery. The fact reached the ears of that potentate, who desired to stand well with Americans, and our townsman was summoned before him. He found in the presence of the monarch the whole

body of the scanty force on duty in the town. "Can you pick out the man who insulted you?" asked the sable autocrat. Captain H—— pointed him out; but beginning to fear the infliction of some punishment too severe, attempted to extenuate the offence. "Stop!" cried Christophe, and called the soldier near him. "Do you say this was the man of whom you have told me?" "Yes, sir, it is," replied the alarmed captain; "but" — In an instant Christophe had drawn his sword, and with one blow struck off the head of the unlucky culprit. The terror of the accusing party, at such a sudden and bloody consummation, may be partly imagined. He procured his clearance as soon as possible, and I believe made his future voyages to waters under a less summarily sanguinary domination.

We had also a *soi-disant* nobleman, of really the humblest extraction, and ignorant to a singular degree, but known by his eccentricities far and wide, who, on the score

of a little money accidentally amassed, proclaimed himself, by an inscription beneath a wooden statue of himself, in front of his residence, — "LORD OF THE EAST, LORD OF THE WEST, AND THE GREATEST PHILOSOPHER IN THE WESTERN WORLD." He decorated his court-yard with an extraordinary amount of lumber of this sort, in the shape of human beings, and dumb creatures of many sorts, each statue standing upon its separate pillar, to the intense admiration of the gaping rustics who visited the town to inspect it; and he fairly beat the Scottish Earl of Buchan, who was infected with a similar mania. Upon an arch directly opposite his front door, he had placed Washington, Adams, and Jefferson. Adams, on the right, was bareheaded, and upon an inquiry by some one why this distinction was made, since Jefferson's chapeau was in its place, the great "lord" replied: "Do you suppose I would have anybody stand at the right hand of Washington, with his

hat on?" He was said, also, upon certain hilarious occasions, celebrated in a tomb which he had constructed under a summer-house in his garden, to have indulged in the mastication of bank-bills between slices of bread and butter, doubtless to the envy of his boon companions; not, as might be inferred, of the better or richer classes, though, considering all things, it is perhaps needless to hope that these current symbols of value were a little cleaner than most of those of modern date. All this statuary rubbish, however, was long ago removed; and the house and grounds, by the taste of the present owner, have since ranked among the most pleasing objects of inspection in the town.

This notably low and singularly eccentric character, as I have remarked, fairly beat that other oddity, — in a different class of life and contemporary with him, — the Scottish Earl of Buchan, elder half-brother of Lord Chancellor Erskine. That nobleman

was possessed with a passion for the busts of persons, eminent or otherwise, not dissimilar to that of our New England "lord" for wooden statuary, and perhaps was actuated by equal vanity, though a person of real literary accomplishment, and in no sense, except as mentioned, to be put in comparison with the other. He displayed to his visitors a large and most incongruous collection of these objects of art in a sort of grotto excavated in his garden, thus reversing, however, the more conspicuous procedure of his brother connoisseur, who exhibited his assemblage of rarities in his front yard. The Scottish Earl, certainly, had some literary pretensions, while the "lord" Timothy, who could neither read nor write with ordinary expertness, honored the Muses, also, by affording countenance to a poet. Whether this patronage extended to much material sustenance may be considered doubtful, since this son of Apollo generally stood in the market-

place, when not wandering away to other parts, for the disposal of his wares, dressed in semi-clerical habiliments, himself being of a singularly grave aspect, and retailed frightful ballads of his own composition, and small wares of various kinds from a basket on his arm. It is questionable whether any of these literary productions survive to the present day; and I fear that not one of them had any spark of that vitality, potent to influence popular sentiment, which Fletcher of Saltoun attributed to the songs of the people.

In the centre of this market-place — a space inclosed on all sides by various shops or stores, and for some unaccountable reason styled "Market Square," since its irregular outline much more resembled a truncated triangle — stood the town pump, on the spot originally occupied by the meeting-house of the First Church, already mentioned. On two sides of the pump were set the wonted hand-carts of two

superannuated individuals, whose gingerbread, candies, and apples were the delight of such urchins as were lucky enough to have coppers to buy with; for those convenient mediums of exchange were not too plentiful among boys in 18—, and frequently not with their parents either. These old men were the undisturbed possessors of the ground, wheeling their vehicles to the spot at early morning, and standing by them all day, though they never seemed to me to be driving a very thriving business.

But the glory of the Square was during the week before Thanksgiving, — then, as now, appointed for a day late in November, when it was often difficult to make one's way through the throng of teams, and especially sleighs, loaded with poultry fattened for the occasion, and sometimes venison and abundance of other commodities for domestic use. The mention of sleighs leads me to recur to a former remark

upon the earlier approach of winter in those times; for the employment of sleighs implies the presence of snow upon the ground; and the farmers had frequently driven from a great distance, "up country," from parts of New Hampshire and Vermont, even from the borders of Canada, perhaps a hundred and fifty or two hundred miles and more away, to attend the market in our town; sometimes as many as a hundred loaded country sleighs, or on other occasions as many wagons, in a single day. The construction of the Middlesex Canal, connecting the waters of the Merrimack with those of the Charles, diverted the main part of this traffic to Boston; and railways finally conveyed to the capital most of the remainder which came from any considerable distance. Wistful eyes, in the presence of these heaping dainties, were sometimes averted, no doubt, from a consciousness of empty pockets; yet there were always generous hearts and bounte-

ous hands to meet the exigencies of every neighborhood ; and we may be sure that no householder of decent repute, however poor or unlucky, and probably few others, even if a little tarnished in the moral world's esteem, lacked some kind friend who saw to it, that the accustomed turkey or chickens smoked on the board before the eyes of his hungry children on that day, at least, of all the year.

But, unless respectable legends are to be peremptorily discredited, an incident once took place in this Market Square, of which I doubt if any other New England town can show the parallel. I am about to relate a statement made to me, not many years ago, by an elderly gentleman of excellent character and standing, a justice of the peace and of the quorum, and a devout member of the Orthodox Church. The story was told with all gravity and implicit confidence in its truth ; and some may think it exhibits in a striking light

the extent of human credulity and the imperfection of human testimony: "My father," said this worthy person, "has often told me of being in Market Square when a man, a woman, and a little dog appeared, and soon collected quite a crowd by the exhibition of feats of jugglery. At length, after a due collection of tribute from the standers-by, the man produced a ball of cord from his pocket, threw it into the air, and began to ascend it, hand over hand. The woman followed, and after her the little dog. While the crowd was gaping, in expectation of the return of this mysterious trio, some one drove into the market-place and inquired the occasion of this unusual congregation. Upon being informed, he said, that he had just met such a party on the road, about a mile from the town." I had read the most extraordinary accounts, by British officers and others, of exhibitions like this, which they alleged they had often witnessed in India. I remembered one, in

particular, where tigers and other unwelcome guests, and even the somewhat unwieldy bulk of an elephant, had seemingly been brought down, before their eyes, upon a cable fastened by some mysterious agency far aloft; for I suppose it behooved to be made fast in some inconceivable region of the upper air. But that a similar demonstration could have been made in a sober New England town, at noonday, could scarcely fail to "put me from my faith." It impressed me, however, as at least an extraordinary relation, coming from such a source; and happening to meet another ancient and equally reputable friend on the same day, one, too, who had been much about the world in the capacity of a navigator to foreign climes, I took occasion to relate to him the strange narrative which I had just heard. "Oh," said he, "there is no doubt about it; my mother has often told me she was present and saw the whole transaction." "In the mouth of two or

three witnesses," says the Scripture, "shall every word be established." In this case, it will be observed, the witnesses were two, but both at second-hand. I shall not vouch, therefore, for anything except that, as Scott says, "I tell the tale as 'twas told to me," — and it may be set down as one of these veritable legends which all persons are at liberty to reject or accept, as they please. I expect to try the faith of the reader still further before I have finished this historical sketch. People often tell us, nowadays, that vulgar superstitions are altogether things of the past. This may be so in public; but I imagine that in private there is a lurking tinge of it in every human bosom.

CHAPTER III.

In maritime towns, at a season of the year when there is no inducement for them to wander into the fields, boys who have nothing else to do, on play-days, are very apt to lounge, more or less, on the wharves and in the Market Place. When quite a youngster, I witnessed a scene on the spot last named, the incidents of which are as vivid in my memory as at the moment when they occurred, more than half a century ago. Though the commerce of our town had very materially declined from its former condition of wonderful activity and enterprise, it was still kept up with considerable semblance of its former spirit, and, besides our native vessels, a foreign ship occasionally sailed up our beautiful river. A few miles beyond the stream, in the neighboring State, dwelt a population

chiefly agricultural, a portion of which, pursuing the avocation of small farmers and fishermen, alternately, for they were directly on the borders of the sea and somewhat isolated in their position, besides, were certainly a little wild in character and habits; though I am told that great improvement among them, in these respects, has taken place of later years. We called them "Algerines," from which epithet, more opprobrious than probably just, our estimate of their pretensions to civilization may be inferred. It was the practice of these people to bring their fish in whale-boats to our market, which was the nearest to their homes, and to dispose of this fruit of their often perilous labors either for money, or for such commodities as they required. I was standing, one afternoon, near a group of foreign sailors, believed to be Spaniards, with the natural curiosity of a boy, and rough-looking specimens of humanity they certainly were. It

seemed that they had fallen into dispute with the crew, some three or four men, of an Algerine boat, and though the language on one side and the other was altogether unintelligible to the parties, the tones were uncommonly high. Doubtless, the Spaniards were resenting some insult offered by the Algerines, — prompted by that sort of jealousy and dislike with which the lower classes of English blood have been in the habit of regarding those of other nationalities. The quarrel, seemed especially at its height between one of the Spanish crew and a young man of remarkable stature in coarse seaman's dress, with a great bush of long yellow locks hanging over the collar of his jacket, whose name it appeared was Souter. The Spanish champion had drawn an ugly looking knife, from which unfamiliar weapon, flourished so near his person, the Algerine instinctively flinched. At this critical moment, the patriarch of the Yankee crew, a tall, gaunt old man,

with grizzled hair, stepped into the arena, and, seizing the foreigner by the collar, cried out, — "Now I'll bet Tom Souter" (pronounced Saouter) "could take this 'ere fellow right here by the collar and shake every g—— right aout of him," — using a more vulgar phrase, and suiting the action to the word so vigorously that the reeling and astounded Spaniard was glad enough to relinquish the field and to slink away crestfallen with his companions.

As a further illustration of the ways of our neighbors, I will give one more anecdote of an affair which occurred years afterwards. Not far from the hamlet of our friends, the Algerines, but within the borders of Massachusetts, was another settlement, on the outskirts of a thriving village, the male inhabitants of which also followed the calling of small farmers and fishermen, some of them diversifying these pursuits by the occupation of shoemaking, at the ungenial season of the year. They were

industrious, and far less rude than their compatriots, to whom reference has just been made. At this point lived three young men, hard by each other, and brothers, of the name, I will say, of Lowe. One day a tall and respectable looking old gentleman called upon the writer of this history, announcing himself as Colonel Lowe, and the father of the three young men in question. He had formerly commanded, it seems, a regiment of militia, and had a sort of semi-military bearing. He was now in great agitation and distress, occasioned by some trouble in which his sons were involved, through forcible resistance to the civil authorities of the Commonwealth, and he required the professional services of the writer for their defence. He justly regarded it as a case likely to lead to very serious consequences, and particularly dreaded for the young men the disgraceful punishment of the State Prison. It was a case to elicit every degree of sympathy for

the worthy Colonel, and to prompt every effort for his relief. The facts, as they appeared at the trial before the Court of Common Pleas, were quite picturesque. A constable had appeared with an execution against one of the young Lowes, in the matter of a claim which he disputed as unjust; but without giving the peace-officer opportunity to discharge his duty, he was driven from the ground by the trio, in mortal terror of his life. The execution of the process was then undertaken by a somewhat fantastic country deputy sheriff; who was ordered off as he attempted to approach the parties in defence, and between them and the officer there was a good deal of raillery, which had an important bearing upon the final result of the trial. At length, the elder brother Lowe drew a line with a stick across the road and defied the officer to pass it, which he declined to do, but at once made good his retreat, smothering his indignation at such

a rebuff, until he could give it vent in more safety than the existing circumstances warranted. Such reckless conduct was not to be endured, and no doubt the deputy was laughed at by his neighbors for his failure to carry his purpose into effect. The majesty of the Commonwealth had been insulted in his official person, and he determined to summon a *posse comitatus*, to vindicate the power and dignity of the law. Stories in the country, especially those involving any extraordinary incidents, sometimes fly faster than in town, and accordingly these young rebels forewarned, no doubt, of the peril in prospect, prepared themselves, as well as they could, to resist the more formidable invasion presently to be expected. Before daylight, one morning, the mustered force of some twenty men, variously armed, led by the valiant sheriff's officer, cautiously drew near the premises, in the hope of catching the culprits asleep. The brothers were too quick for their visit-

ors, however, and evidently having been on the watch had retreated to a barn, securely fastening the door, and awaited the approach of the enemy. They had with them certain weapons, which were exhibited in the court, consisting of ancient rusty halberds and spontoons, probably borne in turn by their gallant father, in his several gradations of military service. As they were summoned to surrender, a musket was discharged out of a window of the barn, over the heads of the assailants, occasioning considerable confusion in their line. Assuming courage, at length, axes and crowbars were brought into requisition, and the door was forced. As the attacking party entered, however, the Lowes let down the stairs leading to the story above a heavy broad cart-wheel, and as it bounded clattering towards the floor below, the assailants fled out of doors in a panic, and taking advantage of their disorder, the Lowes, disregarding the vast disproportion of num-

bers, rushed upon them, and a regular mêleé began. It is thought, that the smaller party would have been victorious, but for an ugly blow on the head of the youngest brother, which felled and disabled him; whereupon his associates escaped unmolested and he was taken helpless into the house; where he remained until the time of the trial. Of course, the jury found him guilty, for the facts of the case were patent; but it was taken up, by exceptions to the ruling of the Judge, into the Supreme Court, in which, though it would be irreverent to intimate that the justices entered at all into the humor of such a Donnybrook Fair sort of scrimmage, yet, after argument, and it is presumed in consideration of some provocation on the part of the sheriff's deputy, especially the needlessly warlike and really ridiculous aspect he impressed on the affair, leading the young men to look upon it rather as an invitation to play their part,

than as a serious purpose to violate the law, the sentence imposed was only a few months' imprisonment in the common jail. The prosecution was never enforced against the brothers, and never was more lively gratitude displayed, than at the escape of the convicted culprit from sentence to the ignominious seclusion of the State Prison.

CHAPTER IV.

A TERM of the Court of Common Pleas was always held in the town in the month of September, and "court week" was a regular time of holiday for the pupils of the higher schools. Some of us attended upon these solemn proceedings with extraordinary interest, especially when criminal cases were before the court. I know not how it is, but suppose it to be the expected revelation of incidents, as in the plot of a novel, which draws crowds together, in most uncomfortable contiguity in a court-room, whenever a culprit, especially one of more than usually notorious antecedents, is put upon his trial. While most of the old-fashioned lawyers of the Essex Bar were more than respectable for professional acquisitions and legal skill, there were persons among them of distinguished ability

and character; and real eloquence seldom fails to prove peculiarly fascinating to youthful hearers. Who could forget, for example, with what rapt attention he listened, at a somewhat later date, to the glowing language and was stirred by the honest warmth of Saltonstall, incapable by nature of attempting to make the worse appear the better reason; or watched that marvel, the matchless ingenuity of Choate, whose faculties shone brightest, the more apparently hopeless was the cause at stake; or thrilled with profound admiration, under the resistless influence of Webster's force and closeness of argument, rising, with due occasion, to the highest point of eloquent illustration, when some more than usually important matter for adjudication by the court called him from the ordinary sphere of his great practice to the forum of a comparatively inferior tribunal.

Years afterwards, when I had the honor of a place at that Bar, I was much struck

with the testimony of a respectable witness, a farmer named Sheldon, who lived near Beverly Corner, upon an indictment of a fellow for burglary, in entering Mr. Sheldon's house by night and taking the money from his pockets in his sleeping chamber without disturbing the occupants. One of the earliest questions proposed to him was, — "How did the robber gain entrance to the house?" and, by the way, the man had been previously employed as a laborer by the farmer. "I suppose he came in by the usual way," was the answer. "He came in by the door, do you mean?" "Yes." "How did he get it open?" "I suppose he lifted the latch." "Do you mean to say, that the door was not fastened?" "Yes I do; we never fasten it." The culprit was convicted upon various satisfactory testimony; but the incident betokens a state of security, at that period, and a rarity of flagitious offences, which puts to shame the demoralization of our own day.

For the house in question stood on the high road and was scarcely more than half a mile distant from a populous neighborhood, and within less than three miles of a town with many thousands of inhabitants.

Strangely enough, considering the want of precaution on the part of the farmer, coming down, doubtless, from a still simpler period of social life, not half a mile from Mr. Sheldon's house stood a solitary habitation upon a desolate tract of land, and also near the highway, which at a time not long subsequent had acquired a very evil reputation; and with this house became connected circumstances which some may think scarcely admit of the solution of merely accidental occurrence. At the autumnal term of the court just indicated, when I had become a young practitioner at the bar, a certain vixenish old beldam was put upon trial for the offence of maintaining this ill reputed establish-

ment. Her demeanor was singularly exceptional; for she did not scruple to interrupt the proceedings with the most fluent billingsgate, and upon receiving sentence berated the presiding judge in language betokening an extraordinary depth of desperate hardihood. Inquiry revealed the fact, that her solitary house, standing upon an elevated plain of some extent, the ground rising from the shores of Wenham Lake, in front but little removed from the road, and the space in its rear interspersed with scattered groups of funereal pines, had been the resort of various desperadoes, several of whom had suffered punishment for their crimes, and one of them had not long before committed suicide in jail, to escape public execution for a most atrocious murder.

Late one day, in the beginning of the following Spring, I happened to be called upon to proceed to Boston, distant some forty miles, upon the sudden requirement

of certain business to be transacted the next morning in the city. It was before the railway was in operation, and to accomplish the object in view I was to drive this considerable distance in a chaise, at night and alone. I was accustomed to this mode of locomotion, in my attendance upon the several sessions of the courts in the county, and the idea of fear never entered my mind. Accordingly, starting about dusk, at half past ten o'clock of a starlit night, I had reached a point in the journey where the road rises by a gentle ascent to the plain, on which stood "the house of evil counsel." All at once, the scene and the narrative of the previous Fall flashed upon my mind. Before leaving home, I had bethought myself of a brace of pistols in my possession, which I had loaded and placed in the pockets of my overcoat. And now comes the remarkable circumstance to which I have already referred. These weapons had been borrowed

of a friend, months before, when in the midst of an unusually exciting election for a member of congress, continuing some two years, and stirring up extraordinary rancor in the minds of some of the partisans of the several candidates, I had been threatened with violence, if I should attend the polls. I had notified my opponents that I should vote at a certain hour, on the appointed day, and placed these pistols in my pocket, by way of defence; but nothing inconsistent with my freedom of political action in fact occurred. This was the only time in my life that I had carried such implements, which were then put aside in the drawer of a bureau, and I have never thought it worth while to take them since, except on the occasion now referred to. I had thus provided myself with them, on an entirely different occasion, and took them with me, on a sudden thought, as I was about to proceed on my journey, more in the spirit of

youthful bravado, than with any other motive; for the roads, at that period, were considered perfectly safe, by night as well as by day. As I have remarked, the thought of the shrewish and abandoned old woman, of her house and its evil companions, occurred to me, as my horse slowly ascended the rising ground towards the plain. In a few minutes I was in the neighborhood of a habitation which I looked upon rather with detestation than any emotion of alarm; when what was my astonishment to behold a man — the sound of the wheels of the chaise being doubtless audible at some distance in the clear, still night — come out of the gate in front of the house and station himself in the middle of the somewhat narrow highway. In fact, the stranger was within a rod of the vehicle, and must either be driven over or move out of the way. At this unexpected encounter, I own that my heart, as the saying is, jumped into my mouth; but I

instantly drew and cocked my pistol, and the click probably disturbing the nerves of my proposed assailant, he turned aside without offering further molestation. In a few minutes, the lamps of the mail-stage, as it turned Beverly Corner on its way eastward, were a grateful spectacle, and my onward journey was pursued without other adventure. The driver of that stage afterwards informed me, that the trunks strapped to the rear of their coaches had more than once been cut off in that very neighborhood, and that on one occasion beams had been placed in the road so that the carriage would have been overturned, unless they had been discovered in time, and doubtless had been so placed for purposes of robbery. I inquired, why investigation did not take place on the spot; but the reply was, that the passengers were in haste to get on, were unarmed, and perhaps timid, and preferred to remove the obstacles and proceed upon their way.

The contrast, however, is striking, between the habit of a farmer to leave his door unfastened at night and the machinations of rogues not a quarter of a mile distant, who could be guilty of such crimes. I believe, however, that the existence of such a nest of villains was quite exceptional at that period, and unknown to the farmer, and that his sense of safety, without the most ordinary means of protection to his premises, was at that time the rule. The reader may draw what conclusions he pleases from the facts of my own personal narrative.

I have remarked that politics, never stagnant in our ancient communities, at the period of my story, oftentimes grew extremely warm, and then every leading citizen took his personal part. Nor is it strange that the survivors of those who had borne their share in the Revolutionary War, who had the traditions, at least, of their fathers who served with the New

England troops, and followed the gallant and generous Wolfe up the formidable heights of Abraham, and after the victorious field which cost that true hero his life, stood triumphant, under the Red Cross banner, upon the subjugated ramparts of Quebec, should exhibit marked peculiarities of character; should hold fast to strong opinions; and indeed should manifest that individuality and originality of thought and action which is scarcely witnessed in the promiscuous crowd of our own tamer times. Instead of that indifference, the bane of a republic, among the upper class, the result of accumulated wealth and luxurious habits, the chief men of both parties stood at the door of the Town Hall, on days of election, distributing votes, and encouraging the timid and the doubtful, and their influence was effectively felt in the direction of public affairs, which now seem mostly to be left to the management of the least competent, and

often the most ignorant, mercenary, and corrupt. I firmly believe that the equal, if not preëminent position long maintained by Massachusetts, among rivals vastly superior in territory and population, was owing to the active interest formerly taken by her leading men of all professions and occupations in the politics of the day, and that thus the sources of political well being were kept comparatively pure. At present, these men take their political opinions from the newspaper they read, and trouble themselves very little further about a matter in which their own stake, one would think, would rouse them to exertion, from the promptings of enlightened self-interest, if not from the more generous emotions of public spirit.

On one occasion, when some eager dispute had arisen, as to which of the two parties actually preponderated, for the balance sometimes wavered from one side to the other, it was determined to poll the

town ; that is, to assemble all citizens entitled to vote in the Town Hall, to divide them personally according to their several politics and by actual count to ascertain which was the strongest in point of numbers. I happened to be present, as a boy who heard political questions discussed with animation at home, and was curious to witness the scene, which was one really of the intensest interest. The selectmen occupied their tribune, at the head of the Hall, and the meeting was presided over by their chairman, a man of imposing height and general personal development, with flowing white locks, who commanded the respect of all parties. His father had been a soldier of Wolfe, and he and his associates were on the Federal side. When the parties were arranged for the enumeration, one worthy individual, who kept the principal tavern of the town, stood hesitating, at the end of the hall, between the two files ; for, in fact, both parties of ne-

cessity made use of his house, by turns, in commemoration of some public event, or for festive purposes, which, to tell the truth, were frequently coming round; for the liquor was both better and cheaper than in these degenerate days. I shall never forget the start which the sonorous voice of the chairman gave me, as he bawled out, — "None of that, Jenkins; we can't have any shirking here; you must take one side or the other," — and he did, amidst the tumultuous laughter with which the Hall resounded. The contest was a good-natured one, and I have no doubt which party proved victorious, considering that the prevailing sentiment of the town was pretty well evidenced by the political leanings of the *Board;* but at this late day it is of little consequence to authenticate the fact.

The father of the sturdy chairman had set up the tavern, after returning from the expedition to Quebec, which he called the

WOLFE HOUSE, in memory of his commander, General James Wolfe, who is presented in such a pleasing light in Thackeray's "Virginians," and, as a noble-minded man and true hero, deserved all which could be said in his praise. In after days, and I believe it is still there, the sign was suspended in front of the hotel, which took the place of that destroyed by the "Great Fire." The brave general wore his red coat and cocked hat, all through the War of the Revolution and that of 1812–14, without molestation from colonial rebels, or Yankees fighting against the mother country, by land and by sea. The tavern was kept for a long time by a shrewd and active host, who had a keen eye to the main chance. Among his dinner guests were farmers who attended market, and others, content to take their meals at half price, after the chief company had finished that repast. Of these was one Major Muncheon, somewhat celebrated for his

remarkable powers of making away with whatever the table furnished. One day, Wilkins, the host, who was addicted to a slightly nasal intonation, addressed him, when he had just risen from his seat, — "Major, I can't dine you any more for twenty-five cents." "Why not?" asked the well-satisfied trencherman. "I tell you, Major," said his host, "the very vegetables you've eaten cost two and three pence" (37½ cents), "saying nothing of the meat and pies." "Pho! Wilkins," remonstrated the farmer, "it's only the second table." "Second table!" replied the host; "why, Major, if you had sat down to the first table, there wouldn't have been no second."

But if parties in those times were often hotly opposed, there was one occasion, every year, when a broader sentiment of patriotism warmed the hearts of all in the fellowship of a common cause. The Anniversary of Independence was duly com-

memorated by appropriate exercises for considerably more than half a century in our spirited town, and with a general loosening of party ties on the occasion, until the War of 1812, when the parties conducted separate celebrations, though the orators were always only too apt to tighten them again by untimely political allusions, in the narrower sense of the phrase.[1]

On one of these anniversaries, the orator expectant we will call Mr. Moses, a member of the Bar, who had already acquired dis-

[1] Of all these productions I have seldom seen one equal to the printed sermon preached by Rev. Mr. Murray, of our Old South Church, upon the Proclamation of Peace; * for its array of various interesting information upon the condition and prospects of the country, and for soundly patriotic views, enforced with fervid and striking eloquence. In one respect, it could scarcely be surpassed. We have heard of the protracted discourses of the old Puritan divines, in both countries with which most of us claim origin, and like them Mr. Murray's sermon must have consumed at least two hours and a half in the delivery. He was educated at Edinburgh and was no doubt a native of Scotland.

* 1783.

tinction and was afterwards a leader in his profession, well known in the county of Essex. It was in reference to this gentleman, that an ambitious colored person of that day instructed the shoemaker he employed, that he wanted "his boots to have as much creak in them as Squire Moses's." On the day before the services were to take place, the orator repaired to the meeting-house appointed for the purpose, in order to rehearse his performance, and having mounted the stairs to the pulpit by a back-entrance, and probably wearing boots, at this time, of less distinctive resonance, did not attract the attention of an old woman who was on her knees scrubbing the broad aisle. The speaker had a melodious and ringing voice, and began, I suppose, — "Friends and fellow-countrymen!" "Oh, lud-a-mercy!" cried the ancient female on the floor, starting to her feet, with uplifted hands. The occupant of the pulpit was a very polite person. "Oh, don't be

alarmed, madam," cried he; "it's only Moses." "Moses!" screamed the woman —"Moses is come! Moses is come!" and not much to the credit of a piety which ought to have felt so highly favored by a vision of the great prophet, rushed from the church into the street in an agony of terror, spreading consternation in the neighborhood by her outcries, until the mystery was speedily cleared up.

CHAPTER V.

I KNOW there are those who will kindly regard these reminiscences of things, trifling, it may be, in themselves, but affording a glimpse of manners perhaps already forgotten by most or all of those who were formerly more or less conversant with them, and which may prove of some interest in the future. We had spent our Thanksgiving at home, in the year 18—, but went all together to the farm of our uncle Richard, who was of the Episcopal Church, for the celebration of Christmas; for many of his persuasion, at that time, regarded "Thanksgiving" pretty much as the Highlander, in Scott's novel, did "ta little government Sunday, tat tey call ta Fast." He was a well-to-do farmer, at a place within easy reach of the town in which we lived, and where very few were at

all rich, even according to the former moderate standard of wealth, and most people were poor, or at least depended on their daily labor for their daily bread. Those were very hard times following upon the war; and that had followed fast upon the Great Fire, which reduced to ruin almost the entire central business part of the town. Our family had suffered private losses, too, by a swindling failure on an extensive scale, — a rare incident in those days;[1] and again by the embargo and the war, most of my mother's limited means having been invested in one vessel after another, employed in the coasting trade, and this source of income at length stopped al-

[1] When a trader failed, as was rarely the case at that primitive period, his sign was taken down at night, to the wonder of the public in the morning, and he remained fast locked from the sheriff, or too inquisitive callers, in his house, until the disposition of his creditors became known, — dependent upon their confidence in his good intentions, or their sympathy with his unexpected misfortunes.

together. Still, people bore up bravely against these misfortunes, and showed quite as much spirit and hardihood as in these latter times, and got along decently, after a fashion. To be sure, the proclamation of Peace, a few years before, had revived all hearts; though I heard of a washer-woman engaged in her avocation, while the bells were ringing, who, on learning the cause of jubilation, peevishly exclaimed, — "Peace! peace! what's peace, when there's no water?"[1] Our Thanksgiving

[1] An anecdote quite parallel to this is to be found in the now late lamented Dean Ramsay's "Reminiscences." He relates, as a specimen of the cool Scottish matter-of-fact view of things, the following communication of a correspondent: —

"The back windows of the house where he was brought up looked upon the Greyfriars' Church that was burned down. On the Sunday morning in which that event took place, as they were all preparing to go to church, the flames began to burst forth; the young people screamed from the back part of the house, 'A fire! a fire!' and all was in a state of confusion and alarm. The housemaid was not at home, it being her turn for the Sunday 'out.'

had been a cheerful one, though colored, as such anniversaries are likely to be, with recollections of the absent, or the dead; for the memory of my father was always present to my mother, then and during a long widowhood of almost half a century, and my older brothers were at sea. My mother was an excellent housekeeper, and we had plenty of the usual belongings of the festival, so eagerly looked forward to by the young, and something to bestow upon others not so well supplied. It was the practice of some of this class to knock at the doors of those thought to be better off, on the evening before, begging "something for Thanksgiving;" and, by way of

Kitty, the cook, was taking her place, and performing her duties. The old woman was always very particular on the subject of her responsibility on such occasions, and came panting and hobbling up stairs from the lower regions, and exclaimed, 'Oh what is't, what is't?' 'O, Kitty, look here, the Greyfriars' Church is on fire!' 'Is that a', Miss? What a fright ye geed me! I thought ye said the parlor fire was out.'"

a joke, the children of comfortable neighbors and friends would often array themselves in cast-off bizarre habiliments, and come in bands of three or four to the houses of those whom they knew, preferring the same request. Ordinarily, the disguise was readily detected. Sometimes the little mimics would come in, and keep up the show and the fun for a while; but for the most part their courage failed them at the threshold, and they skurried away, shouting for glee, almost before they got any answer to their mock petitions. It was a queer fancy, thus to simulate poverty; but kings have sometimes done so. Did not James of Scotland find amusement in roaming through a portion of his domain, as a "gaberlunzieman?" Yes — and even composed a famous ballad to celebrate his exploits in this humble way. In the evening, we had a lively company, regaled with nuts, apples, and cider; and my grandmother, who in-

dulged in the old-fashioned practice, that is for females, of smoking a pipe, sat in the chimney-corner, where a genial wood-fire was brightly blazing, for coal was then a thing unknown in family consumption, duly furnished with the implement, and sometimes called out to us, — "A-done, children, a-done," when in anywise annoyed by us, and occasionally would sing us an old song, of which I remember only "Robert Kid" and "A galliant ship, launched off the stocks, from Old England she came," etc.; and, often when a storm was raging without, repeating to us the rhymes, —

"How little do" (pronounced doe) "we think, or know,
What *the* poor sailors undergo."

But we had a livelier time at Uncle Richard's; for there were more of us and merrier. Of course, those of the household who could be spared from domestic duties had attended service in the morning, and some of us from the town had also ap-

peared at church ; for though our branch of the family were now Presbyterians, we remembered that our common ancestor and the company who came over with him, a couple of centuries and more before that time, were of the Church of England, only protesting against the abuses which had crept into it ; and Uncle Richard carefully preserved, with the genealogy of the family on this side the water, the Orders in Council, prescribing for the passengers, by the " Mary and John," of which my ancestor was one, then lying in the Thames, in the year 1633, amongst other regulations, the daily service to be observed on board, according to the ordinances of the Prayer Book.

No doubt the dinner was all which the domestic celebration of the festival imports, for the farm was well stocked with every description of creature, and with most other things needful for the purpose ; but I may be excused if I remember none

of the particulars, now that so many years have intervened. I know that Uncle Richard always prided himself upon his excellent cider, and there is little question that there was a due allowance of spirits, which most persons of fair means kept, in those days, in decanters openly ranged upon the parlor sideboard. Indeed, about the same period, while I was a student at a famous Academy not many miles distant from our own home, the English teacher, an orthodox clergyman of high repute, who cultivated a few acres of land at the place where he lived on the outskirts of the town, invited a few of the pupils, myself in the number, to assist him in making hay, one play-afternoon. The boys had a good frolic, and, after work was ended, our master treated us to milk-punch, a highly agreeable, but rather exhilarating beverage. Our uncle's house was of the old-fashioned New England description, pleasantly facing the south, with a high-peaked

roof, which descended, in the opposite quarter, to not much more than a man's stature from the ground. In front was a spacious green yard, leading on one side to the garden for vegetables and trees of the choicer kinds of fruit, and sprinkled here and there with bunches of gay flowers; and at the entrance gate by the road two magnificent elms, of an age and height which denoted that they must have given shade to several past generations from the summer heat, flung out drooping branches which extended a very great distance from the parent trunks. After dinner, our host entertained us with a narrative of his recent visit to the capital town of Boston, to testify, in company with a former neighbor, now resident there, in behalf of his hired man, Jasper Towne, of English birth, who having, duly and at a long term beforehand, declared his intention, in proper form, was at length, after a continuous residence of fourteen years in the United

States, admitted by the Federal Court to all the rights and privileges which free citizenship could confer upon him. The scene in court my uncle thought peculiarly solemn and impressive. The candidate for the franchise was strictly questioned by the presiding justice, in open court, with regard to his origin and his past life. The witnesses were subjected to a similar scrutiny as to his character and habits, and their judgment of his fitness for the responsible position and the new duties he was about to assume. When this part of the transaction was completed, the oaths of renunciation of allegiance to every foreign power, prince, or potentate whatsoever, and the oath to support the Constitution of the United States were administered to him by the clerk in a manner to fix it in his mind that it was a very serious business, indeed, in which he had just been engaged. Thereupon, the judge addressed him in language of congratulation and

counsel, and our newly-made fellow-countryman respectfully departed from the tribunal, conscious that he had attained no mean privilege and had secured a safeguard, like that, by the declaration of which the Apostle of the Gentiles stayed the uplifted hands of his persecutors, and caused them to tremble at the thought of misuse or degradation inflicted upon a Roman citizen. Now, I believe, whatever is left of the ceremony upon such occasions is slurred over in a clerk's office, or the part performed in court scarcely attracts the attention of the magistrate upon the bench. The moral of this change of practice may be left to the reflection of the judicious reader. But it was something then to be, or to be made an American citizen.

Not long before this, there had been an earthquake, which, though of brief duration, had caused no little alarm, — a terrific sound always, however slight the shock, — and in this instance making houses tremble

and shaking down various articles from their places of deposit. In the early days of the colony, these phenomena were not uncommon, and are said to have been of no little power in this part of New England. Uncle Richard described the recent one as rumbling under the frozen ground leading to his barns, as if a line of heavily-loaded wagons had rolled over it. Being something of a philosopher, and better educated than usual at the time, he explained the cause of such physical occurrences to us young ones.

"The fact is," he said, "the water in certain parts of the earth becomes intensely heated and lets off a quantity of steam of amazing expansive power. It is like a tea-kettle, which if you shut the nozzle tight, may either throw off the lid with great force, or the kettle itself bursts with the strain upon it. So the steam, under the earth, heated by central fires, and gaining immense volume and power, seeks the

hollows in its neighborhood, and rushes into them with a force which produces the concussion and the rumbling sound; and the shaking of the surface which we perceive is really like the commotion in the tea-kettle and the trembling of the vessel when the steam has no vent. It is an awful thought that we thus live over the action of these subterranean fires; but they are in the control of the Almighty, and all we have to do is to submit to God's will and merciful providence."

St. Paul's Church, of which Uncle Richard was a vestryman, owed its origin to the separation of certain persons from the Congregational mode of worship, and the formation of a society for the resumption of the Protestant Episcopal pattern, as long ago as the year 1712. Their place of worship they named Queen Anne's Chapel,[1]

[1] It was, I believe, the oldest Episcopal Church in Massachusetts, with the exception of King's Chapel, in Boston, a small wooden structure, which stood upon

in honor of the sovereign "at home," the last of the direct Stuart line, whose royal person, it is said, having grown too unwieldy to permit horseback exercise, she was in the habit of following the hunt, of which she was passionately fond, driving herself, helter-skelter, in a one-horse chaise. She has the credit of having bestowed some endowment upon the Chapel, and the Bishop of London presented it with a bell; which, if all accounts be true, still hangs in the steeple of a congregational meeting-house within the precinct of the "Plains," where the Chapel once stood. For that edifice, probably not having been very substantially built, and being situated on a barren tract of land, afterwards known as "Grasshopper Plains," and, for the convenience of the scattered parishioners, placed at a distance from every one of them, and hence subject to various

the place where the stone edifice of that name is now situated.

causes of dilapidation, especially when St. Paul's, within the town, was in process of construction, at length fell to ruin ; and the bell was carried privately away — so runs the tale — and was long buried in the ground, but has now for many years summoned the people to a style of worship which would have appealed in vain to the good Bishop of London for any such donation. It may be supposed that it could not be identified, after its interment, and perhaps the obliteration, naturally or otherwise, of its peculiar marks ; or the successors of Queen Anne's at St. Paul's, built about thirty years after the former, would have reclaimed their property.

The motives of those who thus revived the relation of their ancestors with the Established Church were not altogether pious ; but the fact incontestibly proves, that after nearly a century of separation from that establishment, the objections to it, in the minds of many of the children

of the colonists, were by no means insurmountable. Indeed, it was about a question of parish taxation that they differed with their co-religionists. The place selected for the meeting-house was so far distant from the homes of many of the parish, that they could not attend without great inconvenience, and yet they were required to pay the parish rates for the support of the minister. They remonstrated and appealed in vain to the civil authorities in the colony and to those in England, for relief; for the law was clearly against them, unless they chose to conform to the doctrines and discipline of the Established Church. Finding nothing in the Thirty-nine Articles inconsistent with the faith they professed, they easily reconciled themselves to the ceremonies, and thus succeeded in their object of removing from their shoulders an involuntary burden.

As may be imagined, at first and for years afterwards, they remained but "a

feeble folk," regarded with suspicion and dislike by the more narrow-minded of their contemporaries, though the days were long gone by, when an Episcopalian, especially if suspected of a leaning towards Popery, was set in the pillory or the stocks. The Church, however, had been long flourishing, in my youth, and I was always particularly impressed when I attended service there, as I always did on Christmas Day, with the organ, an instrument utterly unknown in our other places of public worship, and with the comfort diffused by the large Russian stove which projected from a corner of the building ; while we, for long years afterwards, shivered in our meeting-houses of a cold Sunday. To be sure, the younger children carried their mothers' hand-stoves, constructed of tin in a frame of wood and pierced with holes in the top, to let out such heat as could be communicated by a small pan of coals covered with ashes. But for the male part of the con-

gregation, who despised such a luxury, it was almost impossible to avoid occasionally striking the benumbed feet together, and sometimes the clatter was almost as considerable, as in letting down the seats after the long prayer, especially if that proved to be a very protracted exercise. But I have known young ladies so indifferent to the severity of the weather, as to attend meeting, on very cold days of winter, with bare arms. What would delicate ladies, who, wrapped in warm furs, listen to service in a heated church, think of such exposure now? On one particular occasion, however, our minister announced the text, —"Who can stand before His cold?" and closed the services with the usual blessing, a little to the dissatisfaction, I think, of the more staid members of the congregation, who having come through cold and snow, or a furious wintry storm, it might be, to hear a sermon, were not altogether contented to miss the expected edification, or

perhaps the opportunity of criticising the discourse. Indeed, I know not what my respected great grandsire, an elder of the church in his day, would have said to such defection from spiritual needs towards indulgence in carnal comfort. For it is said, that when some less searching and thorough-going preacher of the word exchanged with our minister, or casually officiated for him, the old gentleman tottered out of the meeting-house, leaning on his staff, and with elevated eyebrows muttered pretty audibly to those near him, — "Peas in a bladder — thorns under a pot — no food to-day!" And however it might be with many of his neighbors, not the minutest particle of the quality of original Puritanism had been shaken out of his system by the changes of the times. The family tradition is, that before the sunset of Saturday everything necessary for the support of nature upon the Sabbath was cooked and in readiness. Whether he allowed the accustomed

beans and rye and Indian bread to remain in the oven subject to the working heat, over Saturday night, I am not able to certify. But in the intervals of public worship on Sunday, — a term, by the way, which he would have scorned to employ, — the family was assembled and ranged around the walls of the room, and the reading of Scripture, or of some well-worn book of devotion, was proceeded with, while the head of the family sat in the centre, with a stick in his hand long enough to reach the head and shoulders of any inattentive or unquiet child.

CHAPTER VI.

An aged friend, years ago deceased, who had seen much of the world, once observed to me, that he had never seen a more "scrupulous people," to use his expression, than our Presbyterian congregation. The clergy of the town were always distinguished, at a period when to be a clergyman was to be much more an object of reverence than in these latter days, and when a boy in the street would scarcely venture to pass one, on the opposite sidewalk, without pulling off his cap. But they set their people an excellent example, though they did not always escape the censure of the over "scrupulous." For instance, Mr. Murray, the accomplished scholar and divine to whom reference has already been made, was known to take no dinner in the interval of public worship,

substituting for that repast a slice or two of bread and a few glasses of wine. Why such a fact, when everybody drank more or less wine, or something stronger, every day of the week, should have alarmed the conscience of Miss Betty Timmins, a maiden lady of a certain age, it seems difficult to conjecture. Nevertheless, she made a solemn call, one day, upon her pastor, and with such apology as she could muster for impertinence — at length out with it: "I must tell you, reverend sir, they do say you drink." "Drink! Miss Timmins," said Mr. Murray; "to be sure I do, don't you? How can anybody live without drinking?" and the discomfited spinster retreated. Mr. Murray had a fund of humor. The parsonage was close by the house of his parishioner, the sheriff, and the adjoining jail and whipping-post in the charge of that officer, and in the last illness of the minister the official was in the habit of taking him to a drive. Once, as he was getting into the

chaise, a friend passed by and he called out, "If you see any one inquiring for me, tell him the last you saw of me I was in the hands of the sheriff." But after his time, and at the period of which I am writing, we had no less than three English ministers settled in the town, all educated upon the foundation of the celebrated Countess of Huntington. I recall, with vivid recollection, the figure of one of these worthies who called himself an "Independent," as he proceeded to meeting on a Sunday: his high cocked hat, his flowing, black curled locks, — more in the cavalier than the Puritan fashion; his long blue cloak over his clerical gown, his bands, his knee-breeches, — objected to by a fastidious young lady, as "short pantaloons," — his square shoe-buckles, and his ponderous cane. His person was somewhat short and thick, whence "lewd fellows of the baser sort" sometimes irreverently called him the "The Jack of Clubs." But he was

a really good man, with the most powerful voice I remember to have heard, and he preached, always an unwritten sermon, but with heads set down, anything but smooth things to his numerous congregation. Towards the close of his life he used to remark, that when he first came to this country, the topic of sermons was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified; now it was nothing but niggers and rum." He was good at retort. Early one Monday morning he was going home from the market, with some mackerel which he had just purchased strung upon his cane. "Mr. Milton," said some passer-by, "them mackerel was caught Sunday." "Well," was the reply, "that ain't the fishes' fault."

One burden of this worthy minister's Sunday prayer, during the sessions of Congress and of the State legislature, was, "Counsel our councillors, and teach our senators wisdom." By many of the stronger faith of an elder day, his fervent supplica-

tions were believed to exercise a specific influence upon the atmosphere, particularly in bringing needed rain at a dry time. I have often heard it said, after the drought had continued a good while, — "Well, Milton has prayed for rain and now we shall have it." This reminds me of an ancedote appropriate to the topic, in that very entertaining book, Dean Ramsay's "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character." At one time when the crops were much laid by continuous rains, and wind was earnestly desired in order to restore them to a condition fit for the sickle, — "A minister," he says, "in his Sabbath services expressed their wants in prayer, as follows: 'O Lord, we pray thee to send us wind, no a rantin' tantin,' tearin' wind, but a noohin', (noughin?) soughin', winnin' wind.'" In like manner, I have heard of a prayer preferred by a somewhat simple New Englander, who was overheard offering his petition behind a clump of bushes in a field:

"O Lord, I want a new coat — good cloth — none of your coarse, flimsy, slimsy, sleazy kind of stuff, but a good piece of thick, warm, comfortable broadcloth — such as Bill Hale wears."

It must be admitted that the reverend person was rather rough in manner; but he had a truly kind heart. Like John Wesley, he was unfortunate in his domestic relations; a circumstance which doubtless tended somewhat to lessen the amiability of an originally good disposition. But, notwithstanding his various trials and we fear conflicts at home, no one questioned his piety. Indeed, one well acquainted with his character and experiences, when his death was announced, at once exclaimed, — "What a change! From pitching skillets, to handling harps!" There could be no greater contrast than in the person and character of our long and well-beloved Presbyterian minister, graceful in person, courteous and affable in demeanor, accomplished in an-

cient learning and in that portion of English literature which is styled classical; a devoted and affectionate pastor, a most able and persuasive preacher; of whom President Dwight, of Yale, is reported to have said, that there had been scarcely such a writer of pure English since Addison. With the exception of some failure of physical powers, towards the close of his life, he retained these admirable characteristics and accomplishments to the end of his more than ninety years. He always preached in gown and bands, with black gloves upon his hands, his nether limbs encased in small-clothes and silk stockings, until in later life he adopted the prevailing mode. We always knew when he intended to preach, because through several intervening yards and gardens we could see from our house the light in his study, at a distance, of a Saturday night. His morning discourses were usually admirable expositions of Scripture delivered without notes;

his afternoon sermons were written exercises, and we so depended upon both, that it was a disappointment when we discovered that he was to exchange, by the absence of the usual light. He would descend from the contemplation of the highest themes, which address themselves to human reason and imagination, and from the relaxation of reading "Tully," or Horace, or Pope, who was a special favorite with him, to the preparation of his fire-wood for domestic use, and doubtless this accustomed saw-horse practice tended very much to the promotion and continuance both of his bodily and mental health. In my childhood, he taught me and other, I fear, reluctant pupils all we were capable of learning of the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, contained, at that time, in a small but miscellaneous volume called the Primer. He was a great lover of the writings of Cowper, which name, in the English manner, he always pronounced Cooper, and of the

Psalms and Hymns and the lyrical productions, in general, of Dr. Watts; and long after I had grown up, he pointed out to me a verse in one of those Hymns, remarking upon a point which I do not remember to have seen noticed elsewhere, that it presented the finest specimen of alliteration in the language, as follows: —

> "How vain are all things here below,
> How false and yet how fair!
> Each pleasure hath its poison too,
> And every sweet a snare."

The eventual condition and standing of our Episcopal Church may be inferred from the fact, that its Rector, in early times, was chosen Bishop of the diocese, a dignity which he long piously and humbly enjoyed. Along the beautiful street on which St. Paul's stood, and in its immediate neighborhood, were some of the more elegant residences of the town, and an air of superior gentility seemed to pervade the precinct, so that some caviller saw fit to call

it St. James's, in allusion to the Christian name of the excellent Rector who succeeded the venerable Bishop. He was, indeed, a most devoted churchman, looking upon all persons outside of his communion as sheep wandering from the fold, and used to say, that he considered the whole town as really belonging to his parish. He was a person very highly esteemed for his piety and sincerity, and as evidence of this repute, and of liberality on both sides, he preached, by invitation, and read the service in the Presbyterian meeting-house, on one occasion, at least, when our minister was absent and his own pulpit was supplied. We were then under another pastor; but some years before this manifestation of truly Christian toleration a controversy arose between the Rector and our Presbyterian clergyman, in regard to the obligatory observance of Christmas. It was conducted in the newspaper of the town, then published only on two days of

the week, and to the multitude of readers appeared more spirited than edifying, as is the case with most polemical disputes. The worthy Episcopal Doctor had asserted on Christmas Day, that the observance of that festival was of universal Christian obligation. The Presbyterian Doctor took up the cudgels to demonstrate, that, although it was proper and reasonable enough to keep the day, as a matter of religious edification, like a lecture-day, for example, by those who saw fit to do so, yet there was no authority, in this respect, binding upon the consciences of those who chose to disregard it. Both of the disputants were acknowledged gentlemen and scholars; but after much argument and learning wasted upon the subject, it is to be feared that the controversy, through the medium of a public journal, between two such highly respected controversialists, on a topic of religious practice, only gave too much occasion to the scoffer. Indeed, Johnnie Fa-

vor, the Episcopal sexton's helper, one of those persons, reputed half-witted, who sometimes make very apposite remarks, observed, — "Well — Christmas here, or Christmas there, I'm not so narrer-contracted as to like to see the surplices of two such good men as your Doctor and my Doctor draggled in the dirt."

Certainly, a tone of unusual refinement pervaded the better educated class of the community in the old town, at the period of this relation, and not a little stateliness of manner was kept up by some of the older families. Indeed, I think they would compare very favorably in point of intelligence and manners, with persons of a similar class, as described by the great authorities heretofore referred to, and others, who have given us vivid pictures of social life in the Scottish capital. To be sure, the colonial days of distinct social rank had long gone by. But, half a generation before, the town had been one of the

most flourishing and wealthy in New England, and to the counting-houses of its principal merchants young men resorted, even from the capital of the State, to learn the art and practice of business. Those who filled the several learned professions were persons of the highest eminence in their several callings, — drawing pupils around them who afterwards, and on wider fields of action, attained great names and some of whom occupied the loftiest civil positions in the land.

Among the students, for example, in the office of that great lawyer and judge, Chief Justice Parsons, while he practised at the Bar, and who subsequently attained eminence, were John Quincy Adams, afterwards President of the United States, and Rufus King, afterwards Senator in Congress from the State of New York, and twice Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain ; and Robert Treat Paine, so celebrated in his day, as

an orator and poet.[1] Of one of these eminent persons I heard a story, formerly, from a friend of very high character as a man and a lawyer, the late Hon. William Baylies, of West Bridgewater, Massachusetts. It seems that while Mr. King, then a young man, was in the practice of his profession in Boston he was detained in attendance upon court at Plymouth, until late on Saturday evening. It was necessary for him to be at home seasonably on Monday morning, and accordingly he mounted his horse early on Sunday, the ordinary mode of travel, in those days, and proceeded leisurely on his way. It was summer time; and in passing through the township of Hanover, in Plymouth County, he approached a plain wooden

[1] The late Mr. Edward Everett is authority (with me) for the story, that on the occasion of the visit of Washington to New England, in 1789, Parsons was appointed to deliver the address of welcome, on the part of the town, and said to his students, "Well, boys, I am to make this address. Now, go to work and write it, and I will deliver the best." He chose the one prepared by Adams.

structure by the roadside, in which, as he could see by the assemblage within, the door and windows being open, that it was a time of religious service. Alighting, out of deference to the character of the day, he hitched his horse and quietly entered the building. It proved to be a Quaker meetting, and perfect silence prevailed. At length tiring of this state of things, Mr. King arose and began to address the assembly upon topics suitable to the day. He was an uncommonly handsome young man, and then and ever afterwards distinguished for extraordinary powers of eloquence. The Quakers listened with mute amazement and admiration to the discourse of some twenty minutes' duration, when the speaker slipped out, remounted, and proceeded on his journey. The incident was the occasion of great and mysterious interest, for a long time afterwards, in the quiet country neighborhood. No imagination could conceive who the wonderful

speaker might be, and many insisted it must have been, indeed, "an angel from heaven." Some years afterwards, at the session of a Constitutional Convention in Massachusetts, Mr. King rose to make a motion. He had no sooner begun, than a Quaker member started up from a back seat, and, carried away by the first glimpse at solution of the long-standing mystery, cried out, "That's the man that spoke in our meetin'."

Provision for the instruction of youth was liberal, and not long previously the most famous, and I believe the longest established academy of the day, flourished in the immediate neighborhood, in all its glory. Of the school-books then in use, I cannot but think that one in particular, Murray's English Reader, was a better manual than any other which has since been produced. For it was mainly made up of extracts from the writings of the best authors, in the best age of English literature, and I can

answer that its lessons were calculated to make impressions on the youthful mind, never to be forgotten. But the prevalent idea, of late years, seems to have been to nationalize school-books, so as to narrow their teachings, and thus to make our future fellow-citizens partisans instead of men. But literature and learning are confined to no age or nation; and meaning in no sense to say a word which could abate the ardor of manly patriotism in any bosom, it is certain that much is to be learned from the history of other people beside our own; and I suppose there are standards of high intellectual attainment in the past, — in poetry and eloquence, and various ranges of thought and expression, — which never have been and are not likely to be surpassed. The deluge of modern transitory literature had not then begun to flow. But, to say nothing of the "Scottish Chiefs," and "Thaddeus of Warsaw," over the pages of which, doubtless, millions of youthful

eyes have formerly shed copious tears, we had Miss Edgeworth's writings, those of Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, the novels of Charlotte Smith, the Memoirs of Baron Trenck, and, perused a little stealthily, Peregrine Pickle and Roderick Random; and in poetry Henry Kirke White and Montgomery were favorites; nor am I ashamed to say, that Cottle's "Alfred" was read aloud at our fireside of evenings, with an interest due to the story, perhaps, as much as to its poetical ability. Original American productions were few; the importation of new works from abroad was not large, and the demand for reprints a good deal limited. But we had the well-known books of sterling value at command, and our publishers occasionally favored us with new editions. One of my early studies was Guthrie's Grammar of Geography, a ponderous volume of English manufacture, which belonged in our family; and I was fascinated with Pope at almost as early an age as

that in which he first "lisped in numbers." I see, by the way, that Forster, in his Life of Dickens, quotes from a letter of Scott, in which he refers to the scarcity of books at Edinburgh in his time.

In connection with this reference to our means of intellectual cultivation, I am reminded of an incident illustrative of a faculty commonly attributed to Yankees, that is New Englanders, though there is reason to believe that some other parts of the country are quite as liberally gifted with the qualities of "Yorkshire." It affords a striking instance of shrewdness on the one side, and of lamentable deficiency of it on the other. This was before the town had exchanged its original simpler mode of regulating its municipal affairs for the form of a city government. On a certain occasion the School Committee became dissatisfied with the master of one of the higher schools, after a brief trial of his qualities, and, as delicately as the subject permitted,

requested him to resign his place. The master was not a native of the town, or of the "region round about," so that it was a mere question of qualifications, real or otherwise, between himself and his employers. He demurred, unless his salary were paid him for the unexpired considerable part of the year for which he alleged himself to have been engaged; but finally consented, if the chairman of the committee would only furnish him with a certificate of honorable discharge. The chairman, at this easy rate of saving the town's money, wrote it, without suspicion of its effect. Thereupon, the master read it, put it into his pocket, and by virtue of the document, demanded payment of the sum in question. It was paid; and the triumphant master forthwith proceeded —

"To fresh woods and pastures new."

The state of things, in regard to our reading resources, was before the modern facilities for gadding about existed; and

while those who find time lying heavy on their hands can now steam it a hundred miles to make a morning-call, journeying was then both more tedious and more expensive, seldom undertaken except as an affair of business, or with the deliberate purpose of a long-concerted visit; and a good part of the day was consumed in travelling half that distance by public conveyance. The consequence was, that people's pleasures, with their duties, laid mostly at home, or near at hand. Hence family and friendly ties were more closely drawn. The better feelings of our nature were, I think, deeper, than when scattered over a wide but thin social surface; just as the water in a well is more concentrated, than if diffused in the basin of a pond. To some extent, therefore, wholesomely isolated, besides the ordinary round of not very formal visiting parties, there were reading circles, for those who were prompted by intellectual yearnings, fre-

quented by young ladies and gentlemen, married or single, at which passages from the better class of books were read aloud by such of the male members as felt competent to the exercise, by turns. In fact, taking into view the intelligence, the inexpensive accomplishments, and the unaffected manners of the fairly educated among us, it has not fallen to the lot of most persons to meet with any society more really agreeable. St. James's, however, and the congregation of the successors of those who founded the First Church, who had at length become what was called "liberal," in contrast with the orthodoxy of the rest of the town, aspired to a higher degree of gentility and accomplishment than the commonalty; and, in evidence that we were not bigoted, my mother would sometimes allow me, when a boy, and desirous of some change, to attend service of an afternoon, at the latter place of public worship with some friends of the family who

waited upon its ministrations. Of the diversions of the common people I particularly remember one under the curious name of a "Joppa Jine" (join); to which I allude from the oddity of its name, derived from a part of the town so called by the river-side, when several families of neighbors and friends contributed their respective quota of a common feast, and repaired to the island at the mouth of the river to enjoy a day of leisure and merriment.

In a certain class, the ancient pronunciation of many English words was maintained, doubtless brought by the ancestors of New England families from "home," and transmitted to their descendants; such as *airth* for earth, *fairm* for firm, *sartain* for certain, *pint* for point, en*vy* for envy, *ax* with the broad *â* for ask, *housen* for houses, *his'n* and *her'n* for his and hers, *rare* for rear; as, for instance, the horse *rares* up; and sounding the *l* in would. Common enough names, too, were clipped or con-

tracted in English fashion. Thus, the names of Norwood and Harwood became Norrod in sound and Harrod in spelling; and the name of Currier, whether with any reference or not to the French *Cuir*, for leather, was not long since uniformly pronounced *Kiah*, with the long *ī;* Thurlow was strangely transformed into *Thurrill;* and Pierpont, often formerly spelled Pierpoint, with entire neglect of its derivation, was pronounced *Pearpint*, by old-fashioned people, the first syllable approximating to the original formation of *pierre.*

In connection with this modification of language, I observe in a daily paper how much a worthy old lady puzzled her minister, for a moment, by inquiring the meaning of "silver shiners for Diana," in the Bible; but a good deacon, at an evening meeting in the chapel of their house of worship, in our town, sadly disturbed the gravity of the religious assembly, by reading it *silver shins for Dinah!*

CHAPTER VII.

I TRUST it will not be thought inappropriate to the allusion already made to our reading circles, if I here insert a *jeu d'esprit*, the production of one of the members, indicating a certain forwardness in the sphere of literary investigation, and affording a plausible solution of a literary problem, which had been so long shrouded in mystery, namely, the true narrative of "Old Grouse in the Gun-room."

This is the name of the story to which Goldsmith alludes in his comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer." Mr. Hardcastle, the host of the occasion, in preparation for the dinner he is about to give his guests, charges his rustic servants that if he should say a good thing at the table, they are not to burst out laughing, as if they were a part of the company to be entertained. Dig-

gory, thereupon replies to his master,—"Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of 'Ould Grouse in the Gun-room.' I can't help laughing at that — he! he! he! — for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years — ha! ha! ha!" Mr. Hardcastle admits, that this pet narrative of his may properly be considered an exceptional case. On the other hand, it has uniformly foiled the researches of critics and commentators to ascertain what this story really was which "Squire Hardcastle," in the exuberance of his own enjoyment of it, gave them the liberty to laugh at, if they liked. It has been generally supposed, indeed, that the story itself was, in fact, non-existent, and that the ingenious author of the play merely invented the title in order to show off the uncouth peculiarities which it was his object to display.

Now, it so happens, that the means are not wanting for the solution of this mystery, and in illustration of the life of a

writer and a man so interesting as Goldsmith, I am glad to be able to clear up the critical embarrassment. Years ago, the writer of this article fell by chance into the company of Miss Goldsmith, grandniece of Mrs. Johnson, who was housekeeper of old Mr. Featherston, of County Kerry, Ireland. She knew the story in question very well, and it is gratifying to be able to verify the authenticity of the allusion of a great poet and writer in general, of whom Dr. Johnson has said, in those familiar words in his epitaph, that he touched nothing which he did not adorn, and whose character has been very much misunderstood, chiefly by reason of the misrepresentations of Boswell. This parasite of Johnson, who has given us one of the most entertaining books of biography ever written, was jealous not only of Goldsmith's literary reputation, so far as it might rival that of his special idol, but also of the real hold which Goldsmith, because

of his simplicity as well as his genius, had upon the affections of the great moralist. While he was himself admitted to the high literary society which he frequented, on terms of sufferance chiefly, Boswell took every pains to disparage poor Goldsmith. The poet, whose writings possess a charm so seldom paralleled, it must be allowed, gave no little occasion for depreciation, by his want of firmness of character; and Boswell maliciously set forth all his singularities and weaknesses in the most ludicrous point of view. Whoever will take pains, however, to read his delightful "Life" by John Forster, will find the general impressions on the subject very materially corrected, and will see, that, if the hard-driven bard had many faults, he had also many virtues, which, as Lord Bacon remarks, is "the posy of the best characters."

But to the veritable story of "Old Grouse in the Gun-room." It seems, according to the narrative of Mrs. Johnson, that the

family of Mr. Featherston were seated at the tea-table, at the close of a chilly day, a bright fire blazing on the hearth, and the servants, as usual, being in attendance. On a sudden, a tremendous crash was heard in a distant part of the ancient mansion, followed by a succession of wails of the most lugubrious and unearthly character, which reverberated through the echoing passage-ways of the house. Whatever the cause of the sounds might be, there was no doubt they were of the most horrifying description. The family, consisting of the 'Squire, a maiden sister, and one or two younger persons, jumped from their seats in the utmost consternation, while Patrick and the rest of the domestics rushed from the room in a state of terror more easily to be conceived than described, and huddled together in the kitchen, as far as possible from the occasion of their fright.

Imagine a lonely country-house, a quiet

and well-ordered family seated at their evening meal, after dark, of a somewhat gloomy day, the apartment imperfectly lighted by the glowing fire, and according to such conveniences for the purpose as old times ordinarily afforded; the conversation, perhaps, turning on such unexciting topics as the weather, past, present, and to come, or the thoughts reverting, it may be, to such mundane topics as the expected game of whist or backgammon, — and the scene suddenly broken in upon by the most startling and terrific sounds, which seemed to result from no intelligible cause, and for which it seemed impossible to account by reference to any merely human agency. The young folks, after their first scream of terror, sat dumb, pale, and utterly helpless.

"It's the Banshee!" screamed Aunt Nelly, sinking back, in a faint, into her chair.

"It's the devil, I believe," cried the

'Squire, who, notwithstanding age and infirmity, retained a good deal of that original pluck, which had formerly distinguished him as an officer in his Majesty's military service. "Yes, it is the devil, I verily believe; and there is no way but to send for the priest, to get him out of a house that never was troubled in this way before. Where are those sneaking curs?" as Patrick and the rest in a body peeped into the room through the door they had forgotten to shut in their flight, and too much frightened to stay quietly anywhere. "Patrick," called out the 'Squire, "go at once for Father O'Flaherty."

At this moment, another preternatural yell, long-toned and of the most mournful cadence, burst upon their ears, and the dismayed servants fairly tumbled over each other and sprawled and scrambled through the passage, in their haste to get away. The 'Squire followed and ordered Patrick forthwith to mount Sorrel and hasten for

the priest, at the village, a mile or more away.

"O Lord! your worship," cried that valiant man-of-all-work, — though aided in the day-time by two or three assistants from the village, — "O Lord! your worship! only ask me anything but that" — as, of course, on such occasions people are ready to do all but the very thing which the exigency demands, — "O Lord! your worship's honor! I couldn't for the world go round *that* corner of the house, to get to the stable; but if Nancy here — now Nancy, darlint, I know you will, honey — if she'll only go with me, I'll run for his reverence as fast as my poor legs, that's all of a tremble, will carry me" — shrewdly reflecting, as did Nancy also, that the farther they left the house behind, they left the danger, too. This affair being hastily arranged, as the two ready messengers proceeded towards the door, a quick step was heard upon the gravel, fol-

lowed by an emphatic knock, and the embodied household fell back with renewed trepidation; when fortunately who should it be but Father O'Flaherty himself, who found the 'Squire, his family, and servants all huddled together in the hall.

"Good-evening to you, 'Squire," said he; "and faix, what is the matter that you all look so pale? The holy saints forbid that any ill luck has come to this house!"

Again, rang echoing through the open doors and empty rooms the same portentous sound, rendered none the less terrific that its tones were partly subdued by distance. "Holy Father!" exclaimed the priest, crossing himself — "what is that? Has Satan dared to cross this blessed threshold?"

Upon this, half a dozen tongues began to relate the circumstances of terrors only too manifest; but Mr. Featherston silenced them, and proposed to Father O'Flaherty to accompany him to the investigation of

the mystery. Accordingly they solemnly proceeded towards the scene of alarm, the 'Squire having provided himself with a long-disused sword which hung over his mantel-piece, and the priest, more spiritually, brandishing his cross, and muttering "*Vade retro, Satanas!*" and such other exorcisms as occurred to him on the way. The whole body of the inmates of the mansion followed, closely though tremulously, upon the footsteps of the advanced guard, and, indeed, afraid to be left behind. As they reached the neighborhood of the door, whence the sounds appeared to come, there was a truly awful noise of scampering round the room and pattering, as it were, within.

"The saints defend us!" cried the priest, falling back, as this new demonstration was responded to by the screams of the females, who sank to the floor, in the extremity of their terror, when another horrible yell sounded close at hand.

"It's he, I verily believe," said the priest;

"the holy saints be about us! It's he, I wager. Lord, forgive us! for I heard the sound of his hoofs. But where's the dog?"

"The dog!" cried the 'Squire. "Why didn't I think of that before! Open the door, I say, Pat, you cowardly vagabond!"

At this instant, there was a tremendous bounce against the door, which forced the latch, and out tumbled Old Grouse, capering among the party, who still screamed and scattered out of his way, not yet convinced that the Evil One was not loosed and bodily among them.

The relieved household at length returned to their interrupted avocations, and Pat declared to the folks in the kitchen, that all the while he knew it was the dog, only he kept up the fright for the sake of the joke. It seemed that the 'Squire had been out with his gun that day, and had shut the big dog which accompanied him into the gun-room, upon his return. The dog, no doubt fatigued with his excursion,

had stretched himself out in a corner of the room, where various articles tending to his comfort lay disposed. He had remained, until tired of his confinement he had risen, and fumbling about had thrown down an ancient heavy shield, which produced the first cause of alarm, no less to himself than to the household. The moon shining through the window had attracted his attention, and he began to bay, as dogs sometimes will. The sudden fright, and the distance of the gun-room from the family apartment, served to modify the intonation, and in his confusion of mind Mr. Featherston failed to recognize his voice. "Indeed," said he, "I never knew the whelp to bay before."

As time wore on, and the story had often been told by him, it lost none of its original features, except, perhaps, the remembrance of his own agitation. But the fright of the family and his domestics, the assent of the priest to their superstitious

fears, and the mortal terror which overwhelmed them, when out bounded the shaggy black monster of a dog and in an instant was pawing them all round, in his ecstasy of escape, and whatever else was ludicrous in the adventure, was oftentimes related by the 'Squire, with all the aid it could derive from a somewhat lively imagination and considerable power of native eloquence.

And now, if I have only invented this story of "Old Grouse in the Gun-room," for the entertainment of my readers, I have at least attached a tale, which may be thought to have some plausibility, to a famous title, which has run through the world, for so many years, without any tale at all.

CHAPTER VIII.

In a note at the end of Chapter V. of "Waverley," Sir Walter Scott remarks: — "These introductory chapters have been a good deal censured as tedious and unnecessary. Yet there are circumstances recorded in them which the author has not been able to persuade himself to retract or cancel." So if, in giving certain loose hints rather than sketches of characters and manners in a very interesting town, ardently beloved by all who have ever had any near connection with it, during a former generation of its inhabitants, I should be thought to have set down too many "unconsidered trifles," I can only shelter myself under the shadow of his great name, and plead that I had not the heart to leave them out, as they occurred to my memory while writing; and how-

ever they may lack, as they necessarily must, the storied value of Sir Walter's fascinating fictions, they have at least this merit, — that every narrative and anecdote in these pages is a veritable fact.

I should not wonder, however, if a couple of stories or so, which I am about to relate, were looked upon as purely fictitious by the philosophical reader. I do not pretend that the facts stated were within my own experience, only that I positively heard them related by persons of the strictest veracity, who were actual observers or actors in the transactions of which they professed to give an account. People ridicule, nowadays, when in company, the superstitions of earlier times; though it is not unlikely that the nerves of some of the boldest contemners of marvellous manifestations, once universally accepted as true, might still tremble, if alone and under circumstances calculated to awaken apprehension and to puzzle the understanding. Not-

withstanding the accepted theory, that the very pretence of witchcraft, for example, was exploded a hundred and fifty years ago, and the idea of an apparition, in spite of Dr. Johnson's belief, and that of others as wise and stout as he, would be scouted as preposterous in cultivated circles, I believe that there are many places in New England where undoubting faith in both superstitions still prevails, and I know that within a third part of the period above mentioned, very many creditable persons in a certain place in New England accepted the strangest occurrences of both kinds, upon the supposed evidence of their sober senses.

We will imagine, then, that we are sitting in a circle around the fire-place in Uncle Richard's spacious kitchen, on the evening of Christmas-day, the room lighted only by the blazing logs upon the hearth, the glow of which glanced along the walls and drew brilliant reflections from the brightly-

scoured dishes and other utensils of metal, which stood ranged upon the shelves. We were quite a party, and had made merry, according to our fashion, during the day. Uncle Richard was himself the most conspicuous of the group. I have said that he was well-to-do, and he was certainly a gentleman in spirit and bearing. The black dress which he assumed on Sundays, and other occasions of public importance, set off his figure well, and his white hair gathered into a pig-tail behind and tied up with a ribbon by some one of his daughters, of a morning, gave him a venerable appearance, at least in the eyes of us youngsters, beyond what the actual number of his years warranted. For I have observed that those who may have seemed to us approaching the verge of old age, in our youth, begin to look almost like coevals again, as we ourselves have advanced in the stage of manhood. Aunt Judith, on the other hand, who was a maiden lady

of a certain age, was dressed with all the care and neatness which somewhat scanty means enabled her to apply, and, as I am about to produce her as a witness, I feel it incumbent upon me to asseverate, that, being a devoutly religious woman, I have never met in my life with a more conscientious and scrupulously truth-telling person. After tea, my uncle had requested the young people present to sing a new Christmas Hymn, not to be found in the Prayer Book, but the production of a devout poetical acquaintance, in the performance of which he joined with a bass voice of singular compass and melody.

THE CHRISTMAS HYMN.

How hallowed grew the night,
When the auspicious light
Of heaven descending shone along the plain;
And wondering shepherds heard
The soul-inspiring word,
That swelled exultant the celestial strain!

"Peace and good-will to earth,
For, lo, a Saviour's birth!"
So the high song addressed the simple swains;
"The gates of life again
Open to guilty men,
For God, the God of love, eternal reigns!"

What though all earth was still,
And no ecstatic thrill
In wakening lands the gracious message hailed;
Yet through heaven's highest cope
Echoed immortal hope,
And hell's dark caves beneath trembled and wailed.

Let then creation sing,—
Hail, sovereign priest and king!
Blest be thy holy name and holy Word!
Hail, Son of God Most High,
Helper forever nigh,—
Hail, Prince of Peace and universal Lord!

The conversation, at such times, is very apt to run into story-telling, among those who have any stores of memory, or are possessed of inventive faculties, and often turns upon such inexplicable incidents as might well bewilder the imaginations of

simple country folks. My uncle gave us an account of a lad not long before in his employ, who laughed at the idea of supernatural appearances, and was indeed afraid of nothing. "The young scamp," said he, "though I don't know why I should call him so, for he was as honest as he was bold,—appeared so thoroughly fearless, that it sometimes looked like mere bravado (I am afraid he pronounced it *brave-ardor*); and a companion who also lived with us resolved to put his courage to the test. Accordingly, at dusk one evening, when Jack was about to lead the horse to the pasture, he provided himself with a sheet, and placed himself on one end of the cross-beam which rested on the rather high posts of the gate. Jack came whistling along, leading the horse, and, opening the gate, slipping off the halter, gave the animal a slap with it; and as he shut the gate cocked up his eye at the elevated figure. "And as for you, Mr. Devil," says he, "you may

sit there just as long as you please." A decent respect for the proprieties of his position kept the scarecrow quiet until Jack was well on his way to the house which was not far distant. Pretty soon the door was burst open, and, to our alarm, some one tumbled in upon the floor in an agony of terror, as we soon discovered, pale as a ghost and scarcely able to speak. As soon as he recovered some degree of self-possession, he could barely stutter out, — "When Jack got out of sight — I turned to get down — and there sat another one, on the other post — looking just like me!"[1]

A great deal was thereupon said about

[1] Jack's composure has a parallel in that of an old-time Scottish clergyman, as the story is told by Dean Ramsay. On returning home late from a dinner abroad his way led through the churchyard, and some mischievous fellows thought to frighten him. One of them came up to him dressed as a ghost, but the minister coolly inquired, "Weel, maister Ghaist, is this a general rising, or are ye juist taking a daunder frae yer grave by yersel?"

the power of the imagination and the effect it was likely to have upon one who had placed himself in such an equivocal situation, and the terrors which, under its influence, might naturally revert to him, who in an excited state of his own nerves had endeavored to inflict such terrors upon another. Hereupon there was a general call upon Aunt Judith, from the youngsters present, to tell us something about reputed witches in her younger days, — a subject in regard to which she was said to be able to make some remarkable statements, though as yet we had never obtained from her any satisfactory information about it. She seemed a little reluctant to indulge our curiosity.

"As to witches," said my uncle Richard, gravely, "I don't know. Whether the denunciations of them in Holy Writ are intended to apply to any actually supernatural power possessed by them, or only to the pretence of it, — and both are mischievous

in their effect on the popular mind, — I shall not undertake to say. It is certain that the poor old women who are thus stigmatized seem to have little power to help themselves in this world, or, if real tamperers with the powers of darkness, any enjoyable expectations from the other. But this I do know, that I was riding, not many days since, with my lawyer, a man of considerable acuteness, though a little eccentric at times, coming from K—'s Island, where we had been on some business; and as we neared the turn of the causeway to the main road, he pulled up the chaise, jumped out, and placing himself on a broad flat rock by the road-side, began violently to dance up and down and to shake his clothes. 'Good Heavens!' cried I, 'are you mad?' 'Oh, no,' said he, resuming his seat, 'but my mother always told me, that whenever I was coming away from K—'s Island, I must stand upon that rock and shake the witches off!'"

"But your story, Aunt Judith! your story," we all cried out, and after a little more hesitation the good woman *prit la parole*, as Madame de Stäel so often phrases it in "Corinne."

"When I was a grown-up girl," said she, "I and my older sister, who had lost her husband at sea, lived with my mother, who was also a widow. We had few of this world's goods, but health and energy enough to take care of ourselves. At one time, we moved into half a house, in a decent quarter of the town, the other part of which was occupied by an old woman called by the neighbors 'Granny Holt.' Coming from a street of the town at some distance, we had heard nothing that I remember about her; but the day had not gone by, before it was made fully known to us by such acquaintances as we saw, that we had taken up our abode in the same house with a person of a very crabbed disposition, whom all the neighborhood looked upon as

a witch. This was not very agreeable news, but we tried to make the best of it. Our house was near the river-side, and we were surrounded by the families of those who followed the sea, and we endeavored to flatter ourselves with the idea, that idle tales of marvelous things are very common among that class of population; and that the stories we heard were mere gossip, as we whispered to ourselves, for fear of being overheard through the thin partition which divided us from the other tenant. But, 'No!' said one of our callers in a low voice — one of the Pearse girls (a young lady, by the way, about seventy, but Aunt Judith was of a certain age); 'I tell you it's as true as a sermon in the meetin'-house. You'll soon find out what she can do. Why, there's young Stout, as fine a lad as ever walked the streets, or stood by the helm of his vessel in a gale o' wind; and look at him now, pale and cadaverous, and walking round people's gardens, on the edge

of narrow fences where nobody but a rope-dancer, with a pole in his hands, could keep his balance, and a hundred more such antics; everybody knows she bewitched him.'

"'But what for?' we asked.

"'Oh, they had a quarrel, and pretty soon he began to cut these capers.'

"My sister Ann, the widow, however, who had always a brave spirit, declared that she did not care a fig for all the witches in Christendom; but I must own that I was very much alarmed. You may be sure, we none of us much liked this sort of greeting, on the first day of our entering into our new habitation, and we prepared to retire early, my mother, who was a truly pious person, trusting to the only sure defence. Upon going to my chamber, I found there was no fastening to the door; in fact the handle itself was quite out of kilter, and it could not be shut tight. I moved up to it, therefore, a chest of draw-

ers, putting some things on top, and thus brought the door close. I was just about to blow out the candle to get into bed, when I heard a scrambling in the chimney, and you may believe it or not, but it's the solemn truth — a black cat jumped from the fire-place, ran and leaped a-top of the things I had placed against the door, put her paw upon the handle of it, gave me one sidelong glance, opened the door itself and passed out. I was too frightened for anything but to wrap myself thoroughly in the bedclothes, and trembling with terror, at last fell into a troubled sleep."

"Are you sure, Aunt Judith," said my uncle Richard, "that the cat did not go under the bed?"

"I tell you, as plainly as I see you now, I saw her open the door, look round at me with that malicious kind of expression, go out and shut the door behind her; and in the morning everything I had piled up against it was unmoved."

"It must have been the ghost of a cat, then," said my uncle; "but did anything else happen, afterwards?"

"Yes, in a few days we had got a baking ready and the oven heated, when the old woman came in with an armful of wood, threw it down on the hearth, and said she wanted to bake. The oven was for the use of both parts of the house; but we told her as soon as we had got through she should have it. She went off muttering, and when we thought our batch was done and went to take it out, it was burned just as black as a coal."

"I am afraid," said my uncle, "you let it stay in too long, or the oven was too hot."

"You may laugh as much as you please," replied Aunt Judith, with spirit, "but I tell you what I actually saw with my own eyes. We did not stay longer in that house than we could find another place; but before we left something took place which perhaps you'll not find it so easy to explain.

Young William Stout's folks had been so troubled about him, and the doctors said they could do nothing, that they determined to try a 'project.'"

I may as well explain what Aunt Judith's modesty prevented her from doing; that a "project" was to inclose a certain liquid emanation of the afflicted person in a phial tightly stopped, and to put it over the fire in a pot to boil. Of course, as in the case of the sympathetic remedies described by Sir Kenelm Digby and practised by him, as the contents of the phial boil, the witch burns, and she is inevitably detected by the scorching she gets and the scars it leaves behind. It is from this circumstance, undoubtedly, that the nursery rhyme derives its authority, —

> "Hinx minx, the old witch winks,
> The fat begins to fry," etc.

This is precisely the operation of the process in question.

"Accordingly," continued Aunt Judith,

"the Stout folks made all their preparations, in company with some trusty neighbors; the doors were fastened, and exactly at twelve o'clock the 'project' was begun. Everything went on well; but, as often happens in such cases, something was forgotten, or the witches' master interferes; for it seemed, after a while, that more water was wanted, and one of the company took the pail to go to the well for it. As he cautiously opened the door, there to their horror stood Granny Holt, in the darkness of midnight! She came in grinning and complimenting, and without expressing surprise at finding so many persons together, at such an unusual hour, or making any inquiry as to the reason, she said, 'one of their folks was taken sick and seeing a light there, she had come over to beg some herbs.' There was the end of the *project*, and I don't know as it was ever tried again."

"Were you there, yourself?" asked Uncle Richard.

"No," I can only swear to the black cat and the burnt pies; but everybody in our neighborhood knew all about the project and Granny Holt's breaking it up."

We had become pretty well stirred up by this time, but as is likely to be the case under such circumstances, were eager for whatever other marvel might be forthcoming; for no matter how intelligent or incredulous the circle of hearers may be, there is something strangely fascinating in these weird stories. People may affect indifference "amidst the blazing light of the nineteenth century;" but I think that of a dark night, in a lonely spot, the starting up of so familiar a creature as a white horse, for instance, would set the strongest nerves into perturbation, at the idea of something ghostly. Indeed, Addison declared in his day, that there "was not a village in England that had not a ghost in it; the churchyards were haunted; nor was there a peasant who had not seen a spirit."

"Well, Aunt Judith," said Uncle Richard, "these wonderful things seem to have very much gone by, in our day, or else people, for some reason, take less notice of them than formerly. Witches, nowadays, are characters entirely unknown, except," he gallantly remarked, "for the sometimes really inexplicable fascinations of members of your own sex; and, except in one singular instance, I have known of no appearances which could not be rationally accounted for. I have heard my father, however, tell of one which, according to the tradition, manifested itself, one hundred years ago or more, upon a bridge, over the Ipswich River, in our Essex County town of Topsfield, and was the terror of all the country round. He appeared in the shape of a monstrous hog, taking his station, at night, in the very centre of the bridge; and those who had occasion to cross it, on horseback or on foot, were either fain to turn back, as he encountered

them, bristling and snarling, or rushed by, if their occasion demanded it, in a state of extraordinary trepidation. At length, Parson Capen, the worthy minister of the town, riding up to the bridge one evening, saw the spectre in his usual position. Nothing daunted, in virtue of his holy office, the good man thus accosted him: 'You that were once an angel of light, ain't you ashamed to appear in the shape of a dirty swine?' This expostulation was too much for the foul fiend, who at once jumped over the railing of the bridge into the river, and was no more seen."

Amongst others of the few guests of the evening was a young gentleman, a member of one of the learned professions, who was accounted an intellectual person and was of rather grave demeanor. Though known to have been the author of occasional verses which gained applause, he would not have been thought likely to be the subject of any extraordinary hallucination.

He was an intimate friend of our family, and on certain occasions of unusual excitement, if not danger, in the midst of the various adventures of young people, had shown a singular firmness of nerve and presence of mind, and was thought to be in fact insensible to fear. He had listened to the story of the bold lad who saw the supposed apparition on the gate-post, and to that of the Topsfield spectre, with much the same interest as that which Marmion exhibited at Sir David Lindesay's narrative of the appearance of the beloved Apostle to King James in Linlithgow. Apparently induced by a similar irresistible impulse to that which drew from the redoubted warrior of Scott's fascinating poem the rehearsal of his nocturnal adventure, our guest volunteered a relation quite as remarkable.

"I will tell you a story," said he, "of something unaccountable which once happened to me, though the circumstances

are still so vivid in my memory, that I look back upon it with a sort of superstitious dread, and feel a decided reluctance in appealing to the sympathy of others, in regard to an incident which seemed exclusively addressed to myself and was confined to my own sole experience.

"In my senior year at College, now as you know, not many years since, I was appointed by my class to prepare for delivery, on what is called Class Day, a literary exercise, — in fact a poem, in anticipation of the usual Commencement performances, and was at home, during the preceding long vacation, making ready for this event. The writing of poetry for public recitation before a critical audience is a rather exacting occupation, and my ambition was naturally excited to do the best in my power. Indeed, the work absorbed all my faculties; but I preferred to write during the still hours of the night, rather than amidst the ordinary distractions of the

day, spending that period, usually, wandering in the neighboring fields and woods, or in other diversions. The season was summer, and I was sitting one night at an open window, committing to paper such thoughts as occurred to me, by the light of a single candle, — for lamps were then not very common and gas was entirely unknown. Outside, there was not a sound, for the whole town was buried in profound sleep, and our own household was in the same state of repose. It was just on the stroke of twelve. Our house was a very ancient one, though I never heard that there was anything peculiarly remarkable in its history. Sitting thus, and thus engaged in serious, solitary contemplation, the sudden fall of something heavy in the garret overhead gave me a momentary start. I could compare it to nothing but to the effect likely to be produced by something as solid as a smaller description of cannon-ball, though it afterwards appeared to have attracted the

attention of no one else in the family. Supposing that some article of furniture had accidentally fallen, the noise of which had been rendered more noticeable by the perfect stillness of the night, I pursued my occupation, until I felt disposed for sleep. On the following night, while engaged in the same way, and at the same midnight hour, came the same heavy, sharp, distinct thud upon the floor directly above my head. I was disposed to philosophize on the subject, and, though the coincidence was certainly peculiar, I still conceived that this unusual sound, at such an unusual hour, might be attributed to some natural cause. Perhaps, a heavy cat might have jumped down from beams above, on both occasions, and the noise was magnified by the otherwise unbroken stillness, though so far as I remember we kept no such cat of our own. I am sure that the idea of anything supernatural scarcely occurred to me, or was dismissed with derision. Nevertheless, the circum-

stances were peculiar enough to induce me to make a thorough examination of the garret on the following morning, and I was struck by the fact, that it was perfectly bare of any article of furniture above my chamber, or in the neighborhood of that part of the attic, which could have fallen. I was naturally a good deal perplexed at an occurrence for which there seemed no rational means of accounting, but I kept my own counsel. On the third night, at the same hour, when the clear bell from the steeple of a meeting-house not far distant had just tolled twelve, came the same sudden, single, distinct sound of a fall on the floor, directly over my head. I will not say as Marmion did, on the occasion above referred to, —

> " 'I care not though the truth I show, —
> I trembled with affright.'

" On the contrary, though not a little disturbed by incidents so unaccountable, and rendered by the interruption quite unfit to

pursue my occupation further, I deliberately undressed, said my prayers, put out my candle, and went to bed. It was a bright starlight night, and the two windows of my chamber made objects within indistinctly visible. No sooner had I laid my head upon the pillow, than through a door at the foot of my bed appeared a slowly moving figure, turning the corner of the bed and approaching the side of it upon which I lay. I could distinctly see its outlines, and it seemed to me apparelled like a monk, with a hood drawn over its features, and long trailing garments. As Eliphaz the Temanite, under similar circumstances, has related, — 'the hair of my flesh stood up.' But I did not quite lose my self-possession. As the figure came nearer, I instantly threw off the bedclothes and jumped towards it into the middle of the room, — and it was gone! Though startled enough at so strange an occurrence, I reflected that it must be an illusion produced

by some casual disorder of the natural faculties, and returned to bed and slept as usual until morning. But the next day I was much more disturbed in recalling the several circumstances of this extraordinary visitation. The repeated previous heavy blows upon the floor, and their apparent consummation in the vision I supposed myself to have seen, made me, as Othello says, 'perplexed in the extreme.' On that day I told my mother the story; she laughed at the idea of supernatural appearances, perhaps to quiet her son's emotion; but she said she was afraid of no ghosts, proposed an exchange of chambers, and this accommodation at once took place. But though I finished and delivered the poem in question, I continued to muse by myself upon what had occurred, unwilling to speak to any one about it. It was many months before I recovered from the shock to my nervous system. Reflecting upon it at the time, again I summoned whatever phi-

losophy I had at command, as well as I could. I conceived that possibly in the excitement of verse-writing, in the silence of the night, some tenseness had affected the drum of my ear; that hearing, or imagining that I heard some unusual sound, amid the perfect stillness around me, a continuous disordered state of physical functions had produced a similar effect at a correspondent hour; and that this experience not unnaturally culminated in the spectral visitation."

We heard the story in terror, and put little faith in the theory of explanation.

"But," said my uncle Richard, himself a good deal amazed at the narrative, "did anything happen afterwards, to account for what you have told us?"

"Nothing whatever," replied our friend.

"Did you ever sleep in that chamber again?"

"Yes, some years afterwards. It so happened that during several weeks in the

summer, our whole family except myself, was away. My mother was in close attendance upon sick members of my sister's family? My brothers were at sea, and even our ordinary servant was dismissed for the occasion. When the time for rest arrived, it was my habit to let myself into the house, to proceed to the same chamber, usually without a light, and go to bed. One night, putting my hand upon the pillow, I felt something soft and started back, but again reaching forward, the object proved to be a dove that had flown into the open window, and securing it without difficulty I gave that symbol of innocence immediate release. Perhaps, it was my former visitant in a less forbidding form. But this, as well as the other, passed into the course of ordinary events."

I need not say, that we had listened to this extraordinary narrative with rapt attention and in breathless silence. Our friend had told his story with emotion,

certainly, but still with serious deliberation, and exhibiting no undue signs of excitement. No one seemed disposed to make any observation upon it, and indeed most of the company were utterly incapable of the effort of speech. In a few moments, he remarked that he would quote to us a brief passage from Dante's great poem which was applicable to the subject, and did so as follows: —

> . . . . "Now, O reader! mark,
> And if my tale thou slowly shalt receive,
> Thy doubt will cause in me no great surprise,
> For I, who saw it, scarcely can believe." [1]

"But, Uncle Richard," was now the cry, "you said you had once seen an apparition, or something like one; please tell us all about it."

"I certainly saw something strange," said he, "on more than one occasion, which has never yet been accounted for; and I suppose it is now too late to expect it.

[1] *Inferno*, Canto xxv., Parsons's translation.

If it was really a matter of concert and collusion, the motive for it has never been discovered. You remember the open space in town, in front of the Reverend Mr. ——'s meeting-house. Your house, as you know, Jemmie," addressing me, " looks directly up the street towards this square, and to the somewhat old-fashioned mansion opposite the meeting-house. On one side of the square was a small dwelling, occupied by several distant relatives of ours; Aunt Midkiff (Metcalf), Aunt Foggison (Ferguson, so called), and her sister, Miss Samples (Mrs. Semple), with the daughter of our Aunt Foggison, Mrs. Lane, and her only child. You remember, sister," addressing my mother, " that you have told me, that one night, after you had gone to bed, your lamented husband stood at the window looking up the street towards the old house above, of which he had a complete view. Upon your asking what detained him, he called you up, and it was

evident to you both that one chamber of the house was in a light blaze. Persons appeared to be moving rapidly around it, and, as it were, pulling down the curtains of the bed, which looked as if on fire. After a little time the appearance gradually ceased, and your husband remarking that he would inquire in the morning of his neighbor, a highly respectable lawyer, who occupied the house, what was the cause of the extraordinary spectacle of the night before, he also retired. But upon putting the question to his acquaintance on the following morning, he seemed astonished, and utterly denied that anything unusual had taken place in the chamber, which was the one occupied by himself and his wife, or that they had been at all disturbed during the night.

"Now all this," continued my uncle, "is quite consistent with the supposition, that this gentleman may have had some secret motive for concealing the fact of a threat-

ened conflagration, pretty sure, if known, to become the town talk and perhaps to expose him to inconvenient inquiries; and though a strictly moral and religious man, he may have thought that the circumstances warranted a direct denial of the matter, seeing it was, as it turned out, an affair of purely domestic concern."

My mother, I thought, looked at my uncle a little anxiously, and seemed about to make a movement for our departure; but we urged him to tell us to what strange thing he had referred, and why he had so particularly described the situation and characteristics of this square, as if there were something more in relation to it which it might interest us to know; for you may be sure our mother had never mentioned to us children anything likely to alarm us.

"I am afraid," said he, at last "that something, which really did happen in front of the house I have spoken of, will startle you young folks, and perhaps it is foolish

to relate it, as you seem already quite excited enough; but I will premise by saying, that I will only tell you what I saw myself, or heard from those upon whose word I could implicitly rely; and, moreover, that I do not believe in ghosts, however singular the facts in question may appear. Of course, you know, sister," addressing my mother, "my calls at your house were sometimes in the evening, after attending the market or to other business during the day. It was during one of your husband's absences at sea, that we were sitting around the fire of a wintry night, when a lively neighbor, a lady who took much interest in whatever was going on, came in evidently in a state of agitation, and taking her seat, with very brief greeting, broke out with the exclamation, 'There he is again!' I did not understand what this meant; but it was soon explained to us that, for a week or ten days past, some person, or figure, or whatever it might be, had been

observed walking fore and aft, in front of the house opposite the meeting-house, at a certain hour of the evening, and though many had passed, no one had recognized him, nor did he take any notice whatever of any one whom he met. He was said to wear a pea-jacket buttoned to the chin, and a glazed hat, as if prepared for any kind of weather ; or, as the gossips afterwards said, indicating the fact that he was the forerunner of the loss of not a few masters of vessels residing in the neighborhood, who perished at sea during the storms of that season. I took my hat and went out to see if I could discover anything uncommon. It was a moonlight night, with a light fall of snow upon the ground. As I passed up the short street to the square, Aunt Foggison's chamber window was thrown open, and her daughter's voice was plainly heard berating the supposed spectral night-walker. 'What are you doing there, you good-for-nothing scamp, you ?' cried she, in

a voice that must have reached any mortal ears; 'why don't you go home to your family, if you've got any family, or wherever else you belong, instead of stalking up and down here, frightening honest folks out of their senses?' Overcome perhaps by the vigor of her expostulation, the window was shut down with a slam. As I advanced, though I certainly had a full view of a human-looking figure upon its round and at no great distance either, and my senses had been confirmed by the objurgations addressed to it by our worthy relative, when I actually reached the ground of his perambulations, prepared to seize a single man by the collar and learn what he was about, it is certain that he was no longer visible. I returned to the house and made report of my unsuccessful doings, and unhitched my horse and drove home. I learned, a few days afterwards, that the figure regularly appeared, giving one sign of vitality by a regular tramp — tramp — tramp — upon the

frozen ground, so far as any one was disposed to listen, and spreading consternation throughout the vicinity. The affair at length became unendurable. Women were afraid to go into the street, and, for that, a good many men too, and it was really so serious, that, as I learned, it was resolved to form what is called, I believe, a cordon, and gradually approaching the place simultaneously from every avenue, so to inclose him that escape would be impossible. Being much acquainted with the people of that part of the town, I was invited to join the company, and accordingly drove in seasonably for the purpose. Certainly, most sober people believed the whole was but some trick, which it only needed reasonable pains to discover and defeat. The mysterious figure, it seemed, continued to walk, ignorant of or indifferent to our devices.

"There were three main avenues, by streets, to the premises, together with a narrow passage way leading from one of the

streets to another. At the appointed hour we duly assembled on our several stations. Our director was 'a rude and boisterous captain of the sea'" — (for Uncle Richard could sometimes be poetical, at least in the way of quoting Shakespeare). "It had been arranged by him that, being on our posts, at a fixed moment, we should move rapidly up the several avenues and so join forces as to form a circle inclosing the open space, and gradually contracting our company, if the rogue was then within our compass we should have him sure. The arrangement had been made in profound secrecy, and if any there were traitors, I was not aware of it. Sure enough there was our guest on his usual stroll. As our circle speedily drew in, and just as hands were stretched out to seize him — presto, as the jugglers say — he was gone!"

"By the jumping gingerbread!" exclaimed Thurlow, our uncle's hired man, springing from his chair by the wall, out-

side of our family party, — seeing this was Christmas night.

"Oh dear sus!" cried Sally Bannocks, our own particular help of many years, from the like position.

"Our detective band," resumed my uncle, "looked at one another in amazement, and after some hard swearing from a few of the roughest, and the exchange of a hasty 'good-night,' dispersed, as far as convenient in companies of two or three, and departed, a good deal disconcerted, to their several places of abode. The same experiment was tried on two or three other occasions, as I was informed by friends, with no better success. Spectre or not, he always found means to elude them; and there were always those who, having no other means of accounting for his evasion, insisted upon it that he must have had confederates among those who sought to arrest him."

"Could he not have escaped slyly into the house?" asked some incredulous inquirer.

"That was hardly likely, with so many eyes upon him. Besides there was nobody there but women and children, excessively alarmed themselves, the husband, Captain Y ——, being at sea, and one of those who was afterwards known to have been lost with all his crew, upon nearing our dangerous coast."

"But why did not the city government make a piece of work of putting an end to such a scandal?" inquired a doubter in spectral visitations.

"Well, I suspect a whole body of police could do little towards capturing an actual ghost; and then, too, there was at that time no city and no such force. Our town government consisted of mostly ancient citizens, and three or four constables, all of whom, probably, preferred to remain quietly and comfortably at home, instead of venturing out into the wintry night air, to hunt up ghosts."

"Why didn't somebody try the effect of a bullet?" inquired another.

"Well, shooting was a rather violent remedy; and as for firing at a ghost, I believe every one was afraid."

"Wasn't it strange, considering that he must have had some particular object in haunting that spot, and was likely, therefore, to be found out by some of the neighborhood by his face, or dress, or figure, or gait, or in some way or other, if a real person, that he never was recognized?" asked another of our evening guests.

"It was strange enough," said my uncle; "but few, if any, got very near him, and they perhaps, casual passers-by, who paid no attention to the fact. As for him, he only walked steadily backward and forward, turning neither to the right nor to the left, except at each end of his beat; replying to no interrogatories, and appearing utterly unconscious of any epithets or railings which from a distance were hurled at him. Only one man ever professed to have seen his face."

"Who was that, uncle?" we all eagerly exclaimed.

"Late one stormy night, when the snow was falling fast," continued my uncle, — "and one would suppose that any reasonable creature of flesh and blood would wish to be safely housed, — an hostler named Dobbin, who had charge of a stable at one end of the street, was trudging home, swinging a lantern in his hand, to the small house in which he lived, at a little distance beyond the now pretty notorious 'Ghost's Walk.' As he approached the spot, there, to be sure, was the object of terror, taking his usual exercise. 'Now,' as Dobbin told the story, 'thinks I to myself, I'll play you a trick, mister, and find out who you are, if I can. So, jest slyly unfastening the door of the lantern, as I met him, I flung the door wide open and held it up to his face, and I says, says I, "A stormy night, friend." I thought I should know him, and guess I should if ever I do

see him again, which I don't want to, I tell *you;* and may I hope to die, if ever I saw that face before. He looked pale, and his eyes, as he fixed 'em on me, had what I call a sort of a stony glare. He never opened his mouth, but just looked. It was only a glance, as it were, for I never was so frightened in my life, and jest dropped lantern and scampered away home as fast as my legs could carry me.'"

"Lud-a-massy!" screamed Sally Bannocks, on the verge of hysterics, — and some of the rest of us were not far from that condition. We were mostly on our feet, and as my mother insisted upon our bidding "Good-night," Uncle Richard proposed, after a further trial of his capital cider, to harness his horse and drive us home in his covered wagon. But it was a fine night and, though getting rather late, we concluded that it would do us more good to take the air, in the mile or two of the walk to town. In the course of our

preparations for departure, and in answer to a variety of questions, our uncle informed us, that the mystery was never cleared up, nor the trick, if trick it were, ever discovered. As to the tale of such a person as Dobbin, we might place what reliance upon it we saw fit; and though the motive seemed certainly difficult to see, it might have been, after all, a well-contrived piece of deception, to be sure, a very laborious and unaccountable one, concealed by the collusion of parties in the secret. How long the ghost continued to walk he did not know; but it finally disappeared, and the house had been inhabited by respectable people ever since, who had suffered no disturbance.

We reached home after a brisk walk, crossing rapidly — and with now and then a furtive look — the very premises so haunted in other days, and "Thanks be to Praise!" ejaculated Sally Bannocks, as we entered and closed the door. The house was cold,

after having been shut up all day. We quickly separated to our several chambers, and as I laid my head upon the pillow and was soon sound asleep, I too, murmured to myself, "Thanks be to Praise!"

APPENDIX.

THE following papers, marked I., II., III. are copies of those discovered among family documents in the house of Mr. H. W. S. Cleveland, of Salem, Massachusetts, several years ago. They were communicated by him to the late Mr. Henry Lunt, formerly a merchant of Boston, father of the late highly distinguished Rev. Dr. William Parsons Lunt, who died, much lamented, while on his travels, at Akaba, in Arabia. How these documents came to be deposited in Salem. it is not easy to say. It is probable, however, that copies were brought over by the "Mary and John," or the "Elizabeth and Dorcas," which appear to have wintered in Boston, after their arrival, the passengers, or such of them as saw fit and were permitted, proceeding to Ipswich, the following year (1634) and thence to the plantation which they called Newbury. It is likely, therefore, that the papers which concerned the

passengers of those vessels might be taken to Salem, perhaps during Governor Endicott's administration, and placed in the hands of some official person at that place, so as to be more accessible to the home of the people in question, instead of being retained at Boston, the journey to which from Newbury was in those days a long and tedious one, to be made on foot through the wilderness.

To many persons the abstract of the Charter of Charles I., which is a very liberal one, can hardly fail to be interesting. The Orders in Council, referred to in the text, are still more so; while the list of passengers by the "Mary and John" comprises many names still to be found in Newbury. Many more familiar names will be found among those of the company which came by the "Elizabeth and Dorcas." It will be seen that in the list given are the names of Thomas Parker, an eminent divine, and of James Noyes, his nephew; the first the long respected pastor of the church and the other the "teacher" at Newbury.

I.

An Abstract of His Ma$^{ty's}$ Charter for incorporating the Company of the Mattachusetts Bay in New England in America, Granted in the 4th yeare of His Highness' Reign of England, Scotland France & Ireland, Anno. Domini 1628 —

And we do further of our especial Grace, certain Knowledge & mere mocion for us our Heirs & Successors — Give and Grant to the said Governour & Company & their Sucessors for ever by these presents, That it shall be lawfull & free for them & their Assigns at all & every Time & Times hereafter out of any of our Realms or Dominions whatsoev^{r}, to take lade carry & transport for in & into their voyages, & for & towards the said Plantation in New England all such & so many of our Loving Subjects or any other Strangers that will become our Loving Subjects & live under our Alleigeance as shall willingly accompany them in the said Voyages & Plantations, And also Shipping, Armour, Weapons, Ordnance, Munition, Powder, Shott, Corn victuals & all manner of Cloathing, Implements, Furniture, Beasts, Cattle, Horses Mares, Merchandizes & all other things necessary for the said Plantation and for their use & Defence & for Trade with the People there & in passing &

returning to & fro, any Law or statute to the Contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding — And without paying or yielding any custom or Subsidy either Inwards or Outwards, to us our Heirs or Successors for the same, by the space of seaven years from the Day of the Date of these Presents — Provided that none of the said Persons be such as shall hereafter by Especial name be restrained by us, our Heirs or Successors ——

And for their further Incouragem[t] of our Especial Grace & favor — we Do by these presents for us, our Heirs & successors yield & grant to the said Governour & Company & their successors & every of them their Factors & Assigns that they & every of them shall be free & quit from all Taxes Subsidys & Customs in New England for the space of seaven years, and from all Taxes & Impositions for the space of Twenty one years upon all Goods & merchandizes at any time or times hereafter Either upon Importation there, or Exportation thence, into our Realm of England or into any of our Dominions, by the said Governour or Company & their successors, their Deputys, Factors & Assigns or any of them except only the Five Pounds p[r] Centum due for Custom upon all such Goods & Merchandizes as, after the said seaven years

shall be expired, shall be brought or imported into our Realm of England or any other of our Dominions according to the Ancient Trade of Merchants, which Five Pounds p^r centum only being paid it shall be thenceforth lawfull & free for the s^d Adventurers the same Goods & Merchandizes to export & carry out of our Dominions into Foreign Parts without any Custom, Tax or other Duty to be paid to us our Heirs or Successors or to any other officer or officers or ministers of us our Heirs or Successors, —

Provided that the said Goods & merchandize be shipp'd out within thirteen months after their first Landing within any part of the said Dominions —

This is a true Copy of His Ma^ties Letters Patent aforesaid — Custom House London 30th January 1633 Anno. R. Caroli Nono —

JOHN WOLSTENHOLME, *Collector.*

II.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

New England, — At Whitehall the last of February, 1633.

Present:

Lo. Arch. Bp. of Cant. Earle of Kelley.
Lo. Keep^r. Lo. Cottington.

Lo. Privie Seal. M^r. V. Chamb^rline.
Lo. High Chamb^rline. M^r. Compt^r.
M^r. Secretary Wyndibank.

Whereas by a Warr^t. bearing date 22nd of this Present, the sev'all ships following bound for New England, and now lying in the River of Thames were made staye of untill further order from their Lo'pps. viz., The Clement & Job, The Reformation, The True Love, The Elizabeth Bonadventure, The Sea Flower, The Mary & John, The Planter, The Elizabeth & Dorcas, The Hercules & The Neptune.

Forasmuch as the masters of the said ships were this day called before the Board & several Particulars given them in charge to be performed in their said voyage, amongst which the said masters were to enter into several Bonds of One Hundred Pounds a piece to His Maj^stys use before the Clarke of the Councell attendant to observe & cause to be observed and putt in Execucion these Articles following viz:

1. That all and every Person aboard their Ships now bound for New England as aforesaid, that shall blaspheme or profane the Holy name of God be severely punis'h't.

2. That they cause the Prayers contained in the Book of Common Prayers establisht in

the Church of England, to be said daily at the usual hours for Morning & Evening Prayers & that they cause all Persons aboard their said ships to be present at the same.

3. That they do not receive aboard or transport any Person that hath not Certificate from the Officers of the Port where he is to imbarke that he hath taken both the Oathes of Alleigeance & Supremacy.

4. That upon their return into this Kingdom they Certify to the Board the names of all such Persons as they shall transport together with their Proceedings in the Execu'ion of the aforesaid Articles — Whereunto the said M^rs^. have conformed themselves — It was therefore & for diverse other Reasons best known to their Lo^pps^. thought fitt that for this time they should be permitted to proceed on their Voyage, and it was thereupon ordered that Gabriel Marsh Esq^r^. Marshalle of the Admiralty, & all other His Maj'ty's Officers to whom their said Warr^t^. was directed should be required upon sight hereof to discharge all & every the said Ships, & suffer them to depart on their intended Voyage to New England — Ex. Jon. Meantys.

III.

The names of such Passengers as took the Oathes of Supremacy, and Alleigeance to pass for New England in the Mary & John of London Robert Sayres Master,

24th Mar. 1633.

William Trace (Tracy)	John Bartlett
John Marshe	Robert Coker
John Luff	William Savery
Henry Traske	John Anthoney (left behind)
William Moudey	Stephen Jurden
Robert Sever	John Godfrey
Thomas Avery	George Browne
Henry Travers	Nicholas Noyce
Thomas Sweete	Richard Browne
John Woodbridge	Richard Reynolds
Thomas West	Richard Littlehall
Thomas Savery	William White
Christopher Osgood	Matthew Hewlett (Hercules)
Phillip Fowler	John Whelyer
Richard Jacob	William Clarke
Daniel Ladd	Robert Newman
Robert Kingsman	Adrian Vincent.

The 26th day of March.

Nicholas Easton	William Spencer
Richard Kent.	Henry Shorte
Abraham Mussey	William Hibbens

William Ballard	Richard Kent
Matthew Gillett	Joseph Myles
William Franklin	John Newman
John Mussey	William Newbey
Thomas Cole	Henry Lunt
Thomas Parker	Joseph Pope
James Noyce	Thomas Newman
John Spencer	John Newman.

For which we gave certificate, together with five others, which are said to be left behind to oversee the Chattle to pass in the Hercules viz.

The names of the Passengers in the Hercules of London, John Kiddey Ma^r. for New England.

These six Passengers took their Oathes of Supremacy & Alleigeance the 24th March and were left behind the Mary & John, as intended to pass in y^e Hercules — viz:

John Anthony Robert Early William Satcome	Cert. the six first to Mt'er Sayers as intended.
Thomas Foster William Foster Matthew Hewlett.	Secondth to Mr. Kiddey to pass in the Hercules.

16th April, 1634.
Nathaniel Davyes
George Kinge
Thomas Rider

William Elliot
William Fifeilde
Henry Phelps.

18. These proceedings were Copyed out of an Olde Book of Orders belonging to the Port of South'ton but now remaining at the Custom house in Portsmouth the 6th Day of December 1735. Per THOMAS WHITEHOUSE.

IV.

IN regard to the costume which prevailed, among persons of wealth and standing in New England, within a century, I quote a descriptive passage from a history of Newburyport, by Mrs. E. V. Smith, published in 1854, as follows: —

"With the incoming of the nineteenth century, garments more in conformity with present fashions took precedence of three-cornered hats, long coats with immense pocket-folds and cuffs, but without collars, in which the men of the eighteenth century prided themselves; with their buttons of pure silver, or plated, of the size of a half-dollar, presenting a great superfluity of coat and waistcoat when contrasted with the short nether garments, ycleped "breeches," or "small-clothes," which reached only to the knee,

being there fastened with large (?) silver buckles, which ornament was also used in fastening the straps of shoes. The gentlemen quite equalled the ladies at this period in the amount of finery, and the brilliancy of colors in which they indulged. A light blue coat with large fancy buttons, a white satin embroidered waistcoat, red velvet breeches, silk stockings, and buckled shoes, with a neckcloth, or scarf, of finely embroidered cambric, or figured stuff, the ends hanging loose, the better to show the work, and liberal bosom and wrist ruffles (the latter usually fastened with gold or silver buckles), were usually considered a proper evening dress for a gentleman of any pretension to fashion. The clergy and many other gentlemen commonly wore black silk stockings, and others contented themselves with gray woollen. The boots had a broad fold of white leather turned over the top, with tassels dangling from either side. The clergy frequently wore silk or stuff gowns and powdered wigs. The ladies usually wore black silk or satin bonnets, long-waisted and narrow-skirted dresses for the street, with long tight sleeves, and in the house, sleeves reaching to the elbow, finished with an immensely broad frill; high-heeled shoes, and always, when in full dress, carried a profusely ornamented fan. The

excessively long waists, toward the close of this period, were exchanged for extremely short ones; so short, that the belt or waist was inhumanly contrived to come at the broadest part of the chest. But no fashion of dress was so permanent as other customs clinging to particular eras. Anciently, as now, fashions were changed more or less extensively every ten years, though certain broad characteristics remained long enough to give specific character to the costuming of the eighteenth century."

The writer is accurate enough, no doubt, in her general description; but what lady could give an entirely correct account of a gentleman's attire? Knee-buckles, for instance, were almost necessarily small, instead of "large"; it may be questioned whether top-boots were ever decorated with tassels, a single article of that sort often hanging at the front of a different kind of high boot, worn long after the beginning of the present century; and as to the silk gowns of clergymen, it is but a very few years since they began to be disused in the pulpit by Presbyterian and Congregational ministers. About forty years before the present period, many gentlemen wore dresses of the cut described by Mrs. Smith, though of a more subdued color, — black, blue, or drab. Not long

after the beginning of the present century, a chief magistrate of Massachusetts, Gov. Gore, made a sort of progress through the State, in imposing style. His elegant, open carriage was drawn by four handsome and spirited horses, and he was attended by his aids and several outriders. The governor was a gentleman of fine personal appearance, and was attired in the highest style of contemporary civil costume, with his white hair gathered behind into a satin bag, and his aids were in undress military costume. He was a "Federalist," and this demonstration cost him his election the next time; for, though a man of brilliant ability and high personal character, he served but one year. At a date fifteen years later, I saw the "Democratic" governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Eustis, in attendance upon the Commencement exercises, at Harvard College, dressed much in the fashion of half a century earlier; namely, coat and waistcoat with broad flaps, small-clothes, ruffles at his bosom and wrists, a cocked hat of the old style, and a steel-hilted rapier at his side. Ten years afterwards, one of the best governors the Commonwealth has ever had, Mr. Lincoln, who served the State in this capacity for nine several terms, wore also a distinguishing costume, but more conformable to modern fash-

ions. About the ruffles to his shirt-bosom I am sure, and feel much confidence, from memory, in regard to black small-clothes and black silk stockings, and his hat was always decorated with a black cockade. Nowadays a governor's appearance scarcely distinguishes him from any ordinary person in the crowd.

The cocked hats, however, and much of the costume of the eighteenth century, continued to be worn by the survivors of Revolutionary officers and some others, during the first quarter of the present century and afterwards.

V.

The subjoined interesting sketch of an ancient dwelling-house and of a family which has inhabited it for several generations, was furnished by a distinguished friend, Thomas Coffin Amory, Esq., of Boston, who traces his ancestry on the maternal side to the family in question. Nor, in producing this highly interesting sketch, could I overlook Joshua Coffin, the historian of Newbury and a resident of that town, from the originally extensive territory of which various adjacent towns were eventually formed. He was possessed of many amiable qualities and inspired by the true antiquarian spirit, and labo-

riously pored among the not very carefully kept early records of the original settlement, and brought much out of chaos well calculated to illustrate its former history. Mr. Amory has, on various occasions, shown the spirit of a careful historical student and of an intelligent and zealous antiquary. His recent contributions to that excellent periodical, "The New England Historical and Genealogical Register," which has become of inestimable value, as a collection of facts illustrative of early New England history and biography, have given great pleasure to multitudes of readers, — especially his vivid and graphic descriptions of certain ancient and storied mansions in Boston and Cambridge, and of their former inhabitants. Let us hope that researches of such abundant interest and value will soon claim and gain a still larger share of the public attention in a collected form.

My dear Sir, — In your reminiscences of Newburyport you must not forget Joshua Coffin its historian, — one of the best of men, whom no one knew but to love. I see him now as he came to visit me several years ago, when he was representing his native town in the General Court, a fresh, hale, cheery gentleman, full of pleasant anecdotes relating to the past. He

owned and occupied the Coffin mansion, which had been the abode of seven generations of his family and name. Out of its portals had issued numberless admirable men and women, and from among the former, a large share of college graduates, at Harvard and other New England colleges, of lawyers, clergy, and soldiers, to do good service in their day and generation.

At his suggestion, I visited this ancient dwelling which was erected about 1649, by Mr. Somerby, the widow of whose progenitor Tristram Coffin, Jr., married. This Tristram was the eldest son of another Tristram, first of the race in America, who not many years before, in 1642, came over from Brixton, near Plymouth, in Devonshire, bringing with him his mother, and two sisters, — Eunice who married William Butler, and Mary who became the wife of Alexander Adams, of Boston. He brought with him also several sons and daughters, to whom were added others born to him on this side the ocean. His family in the home country had shown the same tenacity and steadfastness, exemplified by their long continued residence at Newburyport; for at Alwington and Portledge in Devon, they had flourished, if not from the flood, from periods very remote; for according to the historical statement, the Normans when they came over in the

eleventh century found them there, and left them unmolested ; and there still dwell their descendants in the female line, who have assumed their appellation of Pine Coffin, one of the house of Pine having married the heiress of the family estates.

Tristram the elder, and his sons James and Stephen, were among the nine who purchased the island of Nantucket from the Earl of Stirling in 1659, and went there to dwell. Their descendants have ever since been respectable and greatly multiplied, and not only on that island but all over the country, having since been estimated by thousands if not tens of thousands. Their usual average of children has been half a score, and from their numerous progeny and great longevity, we may judge what vigor was in the race. One of them, William, son of Nathaniel, son of James, cruised over many seas, as commander of a merchantman, and becoming interested in a Boston maiden, Ann Holmes, settled about 1720 in the provincial capital, where among other offices he filled with credit to himself and his name was that for many years of warden of Trinity Church. He died before the Revolution, leaving many children ; most of his sons at that period becoming refugee loyalists, they and their descendants

taking high rank in the British military and naval service. John, son of Nathaniel, was a distinguished officer in the Carolinas, and afterwards became Major-general. His brother, Sir Isaac, early became distinguished on the ocean, was an Admiral, Member of Parliament, and created a Baronet, which latter rank was also bestowed on Thomas Astor, son of William, the eldest son of the warden. Several others of the name and blood then and since have filled with distinction posts of honor and respectability in the civil service of the mother country at home, in Canada, and in India.

But this is a digression. The only connection of the Nantucket branch with Newbury is that old Tristram lived there for a brief period, before repairing to his island home, and his son (the younger of the name of Tristram, the family name of a grandmother) and his posterity occupied the old mansion down through seven or eight generations, and still dwell beneath its roof. At the time of its erection the edifice must have been among the most elegant, as its good state of preservation proves it to have been one of the most substantial of its day, when the notion, prevailing in England, that oak was the most suitable material of the forest for dwellings, governed in their choice,

with less reason, our American planters. It was built in the mode common to the period, round a vast brick chimney-stack, ten or twelve feet square. The principal apartment, now divided into two, possessed, as did also the kitchen, one of those spacious fireplaces which are the marvel and envy of these degenerate days, when a hole in the carpet has superseded in many households the family hearth. It is pleasant to think of the groups that in the olden time clustered around them; charming people, whom we know by tradition, and who are remembered by many associations.

The house possesses various other apartments of size and pretension, and has answered well the needs of the successive generations that have occupied it, not only as a spacious and commodious abode, but one sufficiently elegant to satisfy the advancing standards of taste and refinement. Among the marked features of the building are several small casements, lighting closets and staircases, which give variety to the monotonous symmetry of windows all of a size, one on top of another, and where all the openings for egress or light are in straight lines and of equal dimensions. It is many years since my visit, and I hope you will see it, for much that was peculiar, and made a

weird impression at the time, has passed out of mind. If the trickles in my own veins do not mislead, the present proprietors will be glad to have pleasure afforded to the reading community, even by this inadequate description of a house which has such claims to be known, if, as you intimate, you purpose to place this account of it in your Appendix. They will not consider it a liberty if I repeat what some one not long since told me of an interesting relic of the past discovered on its walls, a statement which might be related almost in the same words of the house of MacPhædrics at Portsmouth.

Not many years since it was concluded to repaper the hall, the walls of which were covered with several thicknesses of paper which had from generation to generation been pasted one upon another. It was thought best to remove them all, and when a large party of young people, home for the holidays, were gathered for a dull week of weather under its roof, they determined to amuse themselves by stripping off the various layers of previous decorations, preparatory to the new one intended to take their place. Underneath them all was discovered, painted on the wall, artistic designs of figures and foliage, such as were common in the days of the Stuarts. All antiquarians are

familiar with the similar discoveries at Portsmouth, to which allusion has been made.

There are not many houses in America which have been so long owned and occupied by the same name. The old brick mansion near Portsmouth, of the Weeks family, the Curtis house at Boston Highlands, Fairbanks at Dedham, Pickering at Salem, were contemporaries in the period of the construction, and have descended from sire to son as has this of the Coffins.

The house is pleasantly placed, and commands fine views from its windows. Even in winter it must be, if not a cheerful, an interesting abode to dwell in. In duller days, when skies are leaden, and the more you see around you the less you like it, its dreamy look of age and strangeness within and without may have a somewhat depressing influence. The aches and agonies of so many generations may gain an ascendancy over the exuberant joys that made their life worth living. It would sometimes seem that if fondness for the supernatural must be indulged, an old edifice like this would prove a haunt more attractive, and certainly more appropriate, for ghost and apparition than any school-room, however noted for its spells. Yet notwithstanding some lugubrious associations

connected with the family patronymic, phantoms would have to tread softly and whisper low if they invaded its precincts; for the vigorous vitality of its occupants and their cheery tones, if up to the traditional standard of their race, would exorcise the very king of spectres himself, should he venture to stalk about at the noonday, or revisit the glimpses of the moon in its ancient chambers.

VI.

I MIGHT have mentioned, as one of the amusements of childhood, the throwing of a piece of paper upon the embers of our wood-fire, for we had no coal in those days, and watching the gradual extinguishment of the sparks, likening it to a congregation entering the meeting-house. "There they go in," we would say. "There's the minister;" and as the final spark disappeared, — "Now, the sexton has gone in and shut the door." I speak of this only as a curious illustration of English ways traditionally surviving in New England. Thus Cowper tells us: —

"So when a child, as playful children use,
Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,

The flame extinct, he views the roving fire, —
There goes my lady, and there goes the squire;
There goes the parson, O illustrious spark!
And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk!

VII.

SEVERAL allusions having been made in the text to the "Wolfe" Tavern, I am able to present the following original bill of lading, constituting an incident in relation to the famous expedition to Quebec, and evincing at least a more formal recognition of a superintending Providence, than is the custom of more modern days: —

12 Oxen,
6 Horses,
No. 29 to 32. 4 Hogshd. Corn,
10 Baggs Corn,
10 Baggs Meal,
2 Carts with Furniture,
500 feet Boards,
1 pr. Smiths Bellows,
1 Box Smiths Tools,
1 Anvil,
1 Camp Kettle,
10 Ox Yokes,
70 Bundles of Hay,
2 Handpumps,
18 Pails,
4 Tubbs,
2 Shovells,
4 Barr's Water,
Settled.

SHipped by the Grace of God in good Order and well Condition'd by Thomas Hancock, by order of His Excell'cy Major General Amherst, in and upon the good sloop call'd the "Endeavour," whereof is Master under GOD, for this present Voyage, William Clift, and now riding at Anchor in the Harbour of Boston, and by God's Grace bound for The Expedition up the River St. Lawrence, to say, Twelve Oxen, Six Horses, Four Hogshead and Ten Bags of Corn, Ten Bags of Meal, two Carts with their Furniture, Five hundred feet of Boards, One pair Smiths Bellows, One Box Smiths Tools, One Anvill, One Camp Kettle, Ten Ox Yokes, Seventy Bundles of Hay, Two handpumps, Eighteen pails, Four Tubbs, Two Shovells, Four Barrells Water; being mark'd and number'd as in the Margin, and to be delivered in the like good Order, and well Condition'd, at the aforesaid Port of ——— (the Danger of the Seas only excepted) unto His Excell'cy Major General Wolfe, or to his Assigns, ——— or they paying Freight for the said Goods ——— Nothing ——— with Primage and Average accustom'd. In Witness whereof the Master or Purser of the said sloop hath affirmed to Two Bills of Lading, all of this Tenor and date; the one of which Two Bills being accomplished, the other one to stand void. And so GOD send the good sloop to her desired Port in Safety, *Amen*. Dated in

BOSTON, *May* 14, 1759.

WILL^M. CLIFT.

VIII.

On my occasional visit to Boston, I usually put up at the Eastern Stage House, perhaps because it was there that the stage-coach by which I arrived at the city discharged its passengers. It was an old fashioned establishment, which but for the absence of galleries, might remind one of the famous Tabard Inn, from which Chaucer's pilgrims set out. For its capacious yard, in which the passengers alighted, and where they remounted for their homeward journey, was approached through a narrow cross street, and in its ample stables the stage-horses took their rest and refreshment. The front entrance to the tavern was under an archway on Ann street, loyally named for the old queen; for which title was not long ago senselessly substituted the unsuggestive appellation of North street. It has long since given place to more modern edifices. It was a comfortable place of temporary residence, and in illustration of former manners I remember one practice which I have never seen elsewhere. At the plate of each guest, at dinner, was placed a small decanter of brandy, holding I suppose half-a-pint of that liquor, and for which no extra charge appeared in the bill, which account itself was

moderate enough compared with the inordinate hotel reckonings of the present day.

IX.

In small matters, as well as in great, history repeats itself. Thus, the anachronic emotion of Miss —— (on page 17) finds its parallel in "Facetiæ Poggii," written at Florence, in the year 1450, of which the following story is one:—

"Cyriac of Ancona, a wordy man and much given to talk, was once deploring in our presence the fall and ruin of the Roman empire, and seemed to be vehemently grieved at it. Then Anthony Lusco, a most learned man, who also stood by, said, jeering at the silly grief of the fellow, 'He is very like a man of Milan, who, hearing on a feast day one of the race of minstrels, who are wont to sing the deeds of departed heroes to the people, reciting the death of Roland, who was slain about seven hundred years before in battle, fell at once a-weeping bitterly, and when he got home to his wife, and she saw him sad and sighing, and asked what was the matter, "Alas! alas! wife," he said, "we are as good as dead and

gone." "Why, man," she answered, "what dreadful thing has befallen you? Take comfort and come to supper." But he, when he went on sobbing and sighing, and would take no food, and his wife pressed him to tell the cause of his woe, at last said, "Don't you know the bad news I have heard to-day?" "What?" asked the wife. "Roland is dead, who alone was the safeguard of Christendom." On which his wife tried to soothe the silly grief of her husband, and yet, with all her tenderness, could scarce get him to sit down to meat.'" [1]

The effect of the ballad, however, upon the worthy man of Milan reminds one of the historical incident, recording the effect of song, celebrated anew in one of the stanzas of Childe Harold": —

"When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fettered thousands felt the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar;
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermastered victor stops: the reins
Fall from his hands — his idle scimetar
Starts from its belt — he rends his captives' chains,
And bids them thank the bard for freedom and his strains."

[1] Quoted in Dasent's "Jest and Earnest." London, 1873.

X.

THE ancestor of Colonel Edward Wigglesworth, mentioned in the text, an officer of the Revolution, highly esteemed by Washington, was Rev. Michael Wigglesworth, author of "The Day of Doom," published in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and reprinted in London; a dreadfully dismal, but edifying poem, and not without a certain horrifying merit.

XI.

WERE it within the scope of this work, I might furnish a catalogue, by no means meagre, of inhabitants formerly distinguished in their day and generation. For example, I have heard it stated as a curious fact, that, not far from the beginning of the present century, each of the three Professors of Harvard College, namely, Professors Webber, afterwards President; Pearson, and Toppan, were natives of Newbury.

XII.

I COULD hardly dismiss this volume from my hands without some reference to the means of public information furnished by the newspapers of the town. Of these, there have been, since "The Essex Journal," soon afterwards merged in "The Impartial Herald," and first published in 1773, between thirty and forty attempts to establish newspapers; but the "Herald," the successor of those before-named, for many years conducted as a semi-weekly journal, and since the year 1832 as a daily paper, has alone steadily maintained its ground. It has always been distinguished for the editorial ability displayed in its columns, and for a care bestowed upon its several departments, which gave it a high reputation, scarcely surpassed by that of leading journals in our larger cities.

"The Essex Journal" was begun by Isaiah Thomas, who in the course of a year sold his interest in it to Ezra Lunt; and he, after two years, obeying another call to public service, sold it to John Mycall. The first of these began life in the humblest condition, without schooling of any kind, it is alleged; taught himself to read and write, and after a time removed to Worcester, became connected with a

noted paper there, the "Massachusetts Spy," at length accumulated a handsome fortune, for the times, much of which, after a long life, he bequeathed to the Antiquarian Society of Worcester, and a portion to Harvard College, and other literary institutions. He was the founder, also, of the American Antiquarian Society. He became a writer and educator of much repute.

Upon the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, Mr. Ezra Lunt was the first man who volunteered, in the meeting-house, when the minister, Rev. Mr. Parsons, exhorted his parishioners to military service; was chosen captain of the company, with which he was present in command at Bunker Hill, and afterwards was raised to the rank of major. He took part in the battle of Monmouth Court House, when the British army, under Sir Henry Clinton, retired with much difficulty and loss before Washington, and used to relate the particulars of the well-known rebuke administered by that great chief to General Charles Lee for his hasty retreat from the advanced post, which had been assigned him. He declared himself to have been close by at the moment, and to have heard the energetic language used on the occasion. After the war, he received his allotment of land, and settled upon it, at Marietta, Ohio.

Mr. Mycall was a person of much natural capacity and shrewdness, with certain eccentricities of character, and kept up a little politic mystery about himself. He once engaged a well-known carriage-maker of the day to build him a chaise, which it was agreed should be finished at a certain time. When the specified period arrived, the vehicle was not forthcoming. Enduring a similar disappointment several times, and expressing himself strongly about it to the offender, that individual promised it to him positively at a certain date, *if he was alive.* Even then, it was not delivered; but what was the astonishment of the faulty party to read in his newspaper the next morning, "Died, yesterday, P. B., chaise-maker," etc. In a state of boiling indignation he rushed to the street, and on the way to the office of publication called the attention of various acquaintances to the wrongful statement, which, it appeared, no one had observed. Entering the office, he inquired, with much feeling, how Mr. Mycall could have published such a paragraph. "Did you not promise me," said the editor, "that my chaise should be sent home, on such a day, if you were alive?" "Well, supposing I did?" "Why, then, of course, you must be dead!" Taking up a copy of the paper from his desk,

and examining the obituary notices, "But," said the editor, "there is no such statement here." The bewildered chaise-maker hastened home to examine his paper anew; and it appeared, on inquiry, that the account of his decease was printed only in his own copy; a gloomy jest, which was soon much relished by the community.

Indeed, the town became for a time a noted place for the publication of standard works, and books of various descriptions. It was here that the well-known Mr. Edmund M. Blunt, who subsequently removed to the city of New York, published his valuable and famous "American Coast Pilot," and, afterwards, the no less useful "Practical Navigator."

XIII.

In attestation of the remark, on page 144 of the text, that an antiquated pronunciation of many English words prevailed long in New England, after it was disused in Old England, and was brought by the colonists from the Mother Country, see the criticism of "Holofernes" upon innovations in pronunciation, in Act V., Sc. 1, of "Love's Labor Lost," showing the state of the case in Shakespeare's time.

XIV.

In closing this Appendix, which might be extended to almost any length, as recollections which did not occur to me in writing the body of the work come up, I cannot omit a remarkable use of the American language, let us say, since the Czar once so denominated the English tongue. It was upon the part of a town constable, perhaps as nearly of the Dogberry type as could be imagined. I was standing in the town hall, at a moment preliminary to a public meeting. A knot of youngsters had been joking one another, when this authoritative official approached. All but one speedily retired before the awful presence. "Master Constable" addressed the lingerer: "*Disperge*," — a difficult operation for an individual, — "*disperge*, I say; we can't have no *burlash* here!"

Even Shakespeare might have been glad of such an opportunity to enlarge the cacology, by actual hearing, of some of his most amusing characters.

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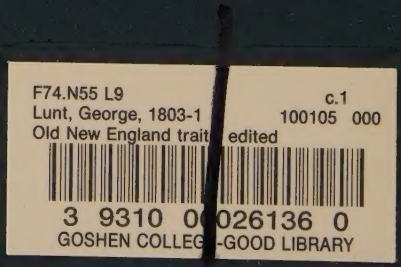

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